

Mr. ROBINSON: From Ontario and also from New Brunswick, but not from Quebec. The Secretary is here and can answer those questions.

The hon. MEMBER: I was going to ask if the Canadian Council of Agriculture had registered any objections to the compulsory feature of the Wheat Board operations.

Mr. HALBERT: I think that some of the questions that have been asked are hardly fair. There seems to be a disposition on the part of some of the hon. members to criticise the farmers. When other delegations come here they do not take up the same attitude. All that the farmers are asking is fair play.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: Surely my hon. friend is not objecting to the moderate questions that have been asked here this afternoon. The same point was raised this morning by Mr. Crerar and I must protest against any suggestion that in asking questions we are criticising the farmers. Nothing of the kind. The hon. member will have to examine the questions very closely before he can discover anything unfair in them. I rather resent these eternal suggestions that if we ask anything that deviates in the slightest degree from the theme presented we are in any way reflecting upon those who are presenting it.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it is the desire of the Committee and of the Government that absolutely the fullest and freest scope should be given in this investigation. While I am not a lawyer, and there are no lawyers here, and while perhaps I am not capable of defining the legal intricacies of the questions which may be put to the gentlemen who appear before us, I believe we will succeed better if we allow any questions to be put which hon. members desire to put so long as the gentleman answering does not object or feel that he is being imposed upon.

Mr. WARNER: I would like to ask Mr. Robinson if it is his opinion that if wheat could be advanced ten cents to the farmer by systematic economic management and by regulating the flow, it would be possible to advance one dollar. One hon. gentleman here made the statement that if you advanced it ten cents you could advance it a dollar.

Mr. ROBINSON: I do not think it would be possible. It is true that you can make the best of the price by an economic and proper handling and proper putting it on the market, but you cannot by any means that I know of increase the price of wheat at all by any noticeable sum. The saving would be in the proper handling, the proper feeding of the market, and in the sense of security and the confidence that it would give to the farmer in his present difficult condition.

Mr. STANSELL: I listened to the careful statement made by Mr. Woods and I understood him to say that if the Wheat Board could be in operation now it would put at least \$25,000,000 in the pockets of the farmers of the west. That is very important as it would enable them to purchase many things that are not purchaseable now. I believe that we should ask questions from every standpoint for one of the first things that would occur to the farmer would be the cost to the consumer. The working man does not produce any wheat. That is possibly the most important consideration next to the one we are considering. I would ask whether the \$25,000,000 which he says would be saved to the producer is a conservative estimate?

Mr. ROBINSON: Without going into figures, I would say that that would be a conservative estimate.

Mr. STANSELL: And that would be without raising the cost to the consumer one cent?

Mr. ROBINSON: I believe that it would not raise the price of flour because, as I have pointed out repeatedly, flour does not have these sudden dips that wheat has. I want to say something further. As a matter of fact, if it doubled the price of flour to-day it would not make a difference to the average family of more than one dollar a week.