

the war. In 1941, when agricultural prices were frozen, during the basic period from October 20 to November 15 of that year, agricultural prices were low. But as a result of representations made to this house by organized agriculture and owing to various other influences which were brought to bear on the government, agricultural prices were gradually brought to a level where they at least represented the approximate cost of production for agricultural commodities.

These very three reasons which contributed to the increased agricultural production are working in reverse to-day. There has been a let-down. The people engaged in agriculture feel that they do not need to do the extra work they did during the war. Many of the older people who were engaged in extra work at that time feel now, since the war is over, that they can take it easy, and so far the younger people who were engaged in the war have not returned to agriculture to take up the reins and increase production.

At this critical period the government should give some lead to agriculture in the matter of keeping up its production, but I fear they have failed to do so. At least they have not given an assurance of what the future of agriculture will be. Let us take the grain growers of Canada to-day, and of western Canada especially. We have been asked to accept a ceiling price of \$1.55 a bushel for wheat and we have accepted it. But I wonder if the committee realizes what the acceptance of that price means to the grain growers of Canada. Let me point out what it means in dollars and cents this year. I will show the significance of that \$1.55 a bushel on export wheat and the \$1.25 on wheat that is being sold to the millers for flour used in Canada and wheat being sold to the feed industry in Canada for feed wheat consumed in this country.

We are exporting this year approximately 325 million bushels at \$1.55 a bushel. Suppose we were to receive the export price on wheat which the importing countries are paying to the United States and which, when we figure it in Canadian exchange, comes to approximately \$2.03 a bushel. In other words, we are accepting 48 cents a bushel less than the world market for 325 million bushels of wheat, or a total of \$156 million less than the world market price.

Take wheat that is milled in Canada. We consume approximately 60 million bushels of wheat. The wheat board is selling this wheat to the millers at \$1.25 a bushel. That is the return which the Canadian farmer receives for this wheat. If he were to receive the export price of \$2.03, that is 78 cents a bushel more on 60 million bushels, he would receive

\$46,800,000 more on this year's crop. If we figure that there are 20 million bushels of wheat which will be consumed for feed purposes in this country, it means \$15,600,000 more than he would receive for that wheat had he received the world price.

Then take barley. To-day it is selling in the United States, or it was on November 20, the last figure I have, at \$1.22 a bushel. In Canada the ceiling price is 64½ cents plus 20 cent equalization payment, or 84½ cents a bushel. On barley there is an approximate loss to the grain grower of about \$28 million. On oats, which are selling in the United States, basis New York, c.i.f. No. 2, at 93 cents a bushel, there is a loss of \$10 million to the grain grower here. In all, in western Canada to-day we are accepting this year \$253 million less than the world price for our crop.

What are we getting in return for this? The government passed order in council 6112 which placed a floor price under wheat, or rather gave a guarantee. I will not use the words "floor price"; the minister objects to that term. The government guaranteed that wheat would not go below \$1 a bushel before 1950. The minister states that to-day the floor price under wheat is \$1.25 a bushel and he is perfectly right, but that floor price is only a floor price for this year and we have had nothing from either the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister of Trade and Commerce guaranteeing that \$1.25 will be the floor under wheat for any further period.

I have here a report of a speech which the Minister of Agriculture delivered to the Cooperative Wheat Producers in western Canada and the statement is confusing. Probably he was misreported. I am afraid that some of our western papers have become so accustomed to misreporting what people in political life have to say that they even misreport some of their own followers. I quote:

There is nothing to indicate at present that the price of wheat will drop below the present floor price of \$1.25 during the next five years. Hon. J. G. Gardiner, federal Minister of Agriculture, said in an address delivered in Regina on Friday . . . On the other hand he pointed out that if within the five-year period it became necessary to reduce the price it could drop below the dollar floor price which the government has established for the five-year period ending in 1950.

Mr. GARDINER: They stated the next day that they had left a "not" out before "drop".

Mr. WRIGHT: I rather expected that was what had happened; nevertheless it did leave much confusion in the minds of many people when that statement came out. The minister should give the committee some assurance as to what floor prices under agricultural prod-