

## Grain

## AFTER RECESS

he is not entitled to, that the farmers of Canada are always demanding and giving very little. In the May 10 issue of the *Alberta Wheat Pool Budget* the editor of that paper put before the public a little article entitled "Fair Play". He pointed out in this issue that utterances and writings across Canada continue to condemn the farmer for his approach to his present economic difficulties. He pointed out that it is said that farmers must stop demanding help, that the price of wheat must come down, that the law of supply and demand must be recognized, that an industry cannot be bolstered by subsidies, that agriculture no longer is indicative of the prosperity of Canada and that other industries should not be penalized by subsidies to agriculture.

These and many other comments are frequently heard from coast to coast in Canada. It is obvious from such comments that many people still do not understand or appreciate the position of the western farmer. Traditionally the western farmer has spurned aid and has preferred to stand on his own feet. Free trade has been the slogan of the farmer of the west since the early days. That, however, is not the way the people of Canada want things. They have decided to protect practically every other industry in Canada from foreign competition. If the law of supply and demand is going to be set aside for others, then the farmers too must play under the same rules.

His costs have skyrocketed because of the high prices others have been permitted to charge in a protected market. He cannot be adequately protected by tariffs because what the farmer produces, particularly wheat, are export commodities. It is neither illogical nor unfair that a small portion of the tax dollar collected from the profits of those who have benefited at his expense be used to support agricultural prices. Agriculture may no longer determine the degree of the nation's prosperity but it is still vital in maintaining it. Ours is not a free and competitive economy but rather a regulated one. The rules that assure the prosperity of some should guarantee at least the survival of others. The moment that all Canadians agree to absolutely free and unrestricted trade so that the farmer can buy his requirements from the cheapest source, price supports for agriculture will not be needed. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that that pretty well points up the position facing those engaged in agriculture not only in western Canada but from coast to coast.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

**Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources):** Mr. Speaker, as I rise to make my first remarks in this house as the new member for Qu'Appelle I cannot help but say in all seriousness that this legislation which has been introduced into this house and which carries my name along with that of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Churchill) represents to many of us a great moment in this country's history. I think I can say honestly that for seven years this has been one of the subjects on which I have spoken and expressed myself all through the western part of Canada. Hence it is not inappropriate that as the new member for Qu'Appelle I should be making my first remarks in this house on the subject of wheat. A predecessor of mine who came from there was a man by the name of Ernest Perley. He represented Qu'Appelle during the years 1930 to 1945. His very name stood for wheat. Every time he rose in his place in this House of Commons, both on this side of the house and on the other side, the members of the house knew what the subject was going to be when he rose to speak. I hope that tonight, Mr. Speaker, my remarks here will do justice to his memory.

The significance of the cash advance to the western farmers can be understood only through knowledge of some of the background of what has happened over the last 20 years. I do not intend to speak at any great length. I just wish to emphasize and to point out the highlights of this background so that hon. members from all parts of Canada may understand the deep feeling with which those of us from the west approach this matter.

The depression was not only a depression to us in western Canada; it was a double depression. All parts of the world had a decline of prices and unemployment, but in addition, we had drought and no crops and the situation hit us doubly hard. In addition, the depression was followed by war in which the people in western Canada were asked to make sacrifices along with the rest of Canada, something which has peculiar connotations today. This part of Canada was put under price control as well as the rest of Canada. Our wheat price was set for that wheat which was sold abroad and a special price of 77½ cents a bushel was set for that grain which was sold for consumption in Canada. During the war we were asked to join in that war effort. Not only were we asked to send our young men and our young women into uniforms and into factories in central Canada,