

The Address—Mr. J. A. Ross

failed miserably with respect to their financial contribution to education throughout the province, and they have failed in other ways apart from that. I am sorry to say that they are so far behind the departments of education in many other provinces.

Reference was also made in the speech from the throne to the downward adjustment in the price of farm products. That is an important issue from coast to coast in Canada at this particular time, and all the more so when you consider the manner in which the producers have been misled by various federal government ministers throughout the past years and encouraged to expand their production. I wish to remind the house and the country that this government from 1942 to 1949, by their policy of, as a neighbour of mine said, "Gardinerizing" Canadian agriculture, has cost the farmer producers of Canada approximately \$2,000 million that they might have had if they had been permitted to market their production on the same basis as the farmers of the United States, that great nation to the south of us. That is a great deal of money which they might have had in good times in order to tide them over the depressing market situation that now faces us suddenly. That is what it cost our producers through controls and embargoes imposed by our own government throughout those years. A recent survey of the Sanford Evans bureau in Winnipeg has pointed out that, with respect to wheat, in the period 1945 to 1949, the Anglo-Canadian wheat agreement has already cost the Canadian farmers \$536,229,978. That is the loss, the difference between what the farmers in the United States received for a like number of bushels of their product and the amount received by our agriculturalists. According to that bureau, the average half section in western Canada had a loss each year of \$1,064; or on a bushel basis the United States farmer received approximately 50 cents more per bushel for his wheat than his Canadian neighbour all during those four years.

At a given point, North Portal, where the main street divides the village, and the United States farmer delivers his grain to the elevator on one side of the street and the Canadian farmer delivers his grain on the opposite side of the street, according to market prices of February 7, 1950, which is not many days ago, the United States of America farmer received at the elevator, equal to Canadian funds, \$2.14 per bushel. The Canadian farmer received \$1.58½ per bushel, or a difference of 55½ cents per bushel. Therefore you will see, Mr. Speaker, that since the survey

[Mr. Ross (Souris).]

of the Sanford Evans bureau, instead of our loss improving since it was made it is becoming greatly aggravated as the days go by.

Then quite recently the federal government have changed the terms of the final year of the wheat agreement, not in the interests of the wheat producers but rather in the interests of certain other producers who had received much better treatment from this government throughout the war years than did the wheat producer. In that respect I should like to quote from part of an editorial of the *Winnipeg Free Press* of December 23, headed "Sacrificing the prairies."

Latest reports from Ottawa are to the effect that by agreement between the United Kingdom and Canadian governments \$2,500,000 is being diverted from the purchase of wheat to lumber. This is the third diversion of this kind to be reported in the past few days. The three amount to \$30 million or to 15 million bushels at \$2 per bushel.

Under the United Kingdom-Canada wheat agreement the British government is pledged to buy 140 million bushels at \$2 per bushel, Fort William, in the crop year ending July 31, 1950. This is the fourth and final year of the agreement. Beyond July 31, 1950, there is no contract and, according to Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner, Minister of Agriculture, no likelihood of one. It is clearly understood, however, that the quantity of wheat not sold under the contract because of these diversions will be bought by the United Kingdom at the price of \$2 per bushel in the crop year 1950-51.

There has been a good deal of loose talk about the diversion from wheat to bacon, lumber and salmon. It has been presented here in the west as a mere postponement of the sale of a few million bushels of wheat, which will not really touch the pocket book of western farmers.

This is not true. The wheat producers of the west should note carefully what is happening to them under the political control of their business. This so-called diversion of cash from wheat to other products means the loss by the wheat growers of this money. There is no diversion at all. To the extent involved—\$30 million as the figures now stand—the people who will receive it will not be wheat producers here in the west but hog producers largely in the east and lumber and salmon producers. This money will be irretrievably lost to the wheat producers.

In debates in past years I have pointed out the great advantage that the eastern hog producers had over our western people. In any successful business I think that we should feed our stock on the farm where the feed is produced rather than clutter up the transport system and the manpower problem; but at one time in Canada, owing to free freight on feed grain coming east, and other advantages, there was an advantage to the eastern hog producers of \$9 per hog. That was a matter of \$125 million of subsidies of free freight which all the taxpayers of Canada paid for. That is only one little example of very much of this business. Both the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and his parliamentary assistant encouraged agricultural producers of wheat, bacon, poultry, dairy