Mr. Fair: It was turned down because of the mischief that was worked among the delegates by the representatives of the international monetary fund.

4. The extension of export markets and acceptance of non-convertible sterling as a means of recapturing and retaining British and European markets. This parliament has to accept its share of the responsibility of our present day dollar trouble and the dollar trouble that we will continue to have unless some action is taken by it and other governments.

5. Provincial-dominion marketing boards to serve as a foundation for—

6. A permanent Agricultural Prices Support Act.

As I have stated already, we are not satisfied to have the Agricultural Prices Support Act on our statute books unless it guarantees something worth while. It is true that there is $200 million in the revolving fund but up to the present time very little of that has been used. I understand that the United States has nearly $4,000 million invested in agricultural surpluses and other purchases. I submit that we should not stop at $200 million if further amounts are necessary, because with an impoverished agricultural population the rest of the country cannot be prosperous.

Mr. J. A. Ross (Souris): When the Minister of Agriculture introduced the resolution he said that he had discussed the matter with the opposition groups and there was an undertaking that the passage of this measure would be facilitated, at least through the committee stages. I have some questions which I want to ask in committee, but in view of the debate that has been precipitated there are a few remarks I should like to make at this time.

Mr. Gardiner: Perhaps I may be permitted to explain so that there will be no misunderstanding. The arrangement with the other groups was in connection with the other bill. I did not ask for an undertaking that there would be no discussion at any stage on this bill. I would appreciate it very much if we could get on to the second reading without further delay, but so far as this bill is concerned there was no undertaking.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I appreciate the minister's explanation as I had understood that the understanding applied to both measures. I would point out that the revolving fund provided in 1944 of $200 million is approximately ten per cent of the contribution the Canadian farmers have made since 1942 toward subsidizing the consumers of Great Britain and Canada. As has been pointed out by other speakers, they have a right to claim some legislation of this nature.

The minister quoted from the speech he made in 1944 but I notice that the October issue of the review of agricultural conditions in Canada apparently brought that statement up to date. There is considerable useful information in this issue and perhaps I should read a paragraph or two to indicate the necessity for this type of legislation. I quote:

> In addition to population increases the food situation has also been affected by a growing awareness of the basic importance of food and nutrition in the welfare of all people. At the same time, the emergence of self-government for some populations has fostered an increasing effective demand for adequate diets in countries where diets formerly were not of much moment except to the millions of individuals themselves. Plans and programs for agricultural development and better diets are now an integral part of the policies of most governments. In some, the energetic prosecution of these programs—along with the contribution of favourable weather—has resulted in substantial progress. In others, the plans tend to remain plans and the blueprint has been accepted as the building.
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> The pattern of agriculture in the world today is shaped by many factors: the food needs of the people, the necessity for better cultural practices, the problem of balancing external accounts and, in some cases, the expediences of international politics. Many devices are employed to develop the production dictated by these factors. These include subsidies, guaranteed prices, bilateral agreements and many others. The degree of this governmental activity varies from country to country. In some, it reaches down to the individual farm, controlling the area of specific crops, the number of each class of livestock, the amounts of food and seed which can be retained on the farm, prices paid and prices received. In others, governments have intervened to the minimum extent thought necessary to protect agricultural economies from the effects of abrupt price changes in the post-war transition period.

I think most farm producers realize what happened in Canada a few months following the publication of that article. It was announced then that we had suffered the loss of certain contracts with the United Kingdom, and a sudden downward trend in the price of bacon and other hog products began. We had a disastrous price fall in eggs. I know of many people who over a period of time had developed splendid flocks of poultry in western Canada, where I am more conversant with these matters, but they had disposed of them before the government tackled the situation. In fact at recent poultry producers' meetings we have had the prediction that, as a result of the failure of the government to take hold of the matter sooner, there will probably be a shortage of eggs next fall. At any rate many of these poultry producers suffered great losses on their investment. There is no doubt about that. According to the bureau of statistics there were in storage at the first of February, 1950, some 25,075,000 pounds of poultry meat. That is about ten million pounds more than a year ago. The