

works successfully in getting the proper kind of administration. It brings before the government the advice of those immediately concerned and makes it possible for the government to act upon it or give reasons why it should not.

Mr. GRAYDON: I presume that a good deal depends upon how close a liaison there is between the committee, the government and the board which happens to be concerned. I take it that if the advisory committee were meeting only once a year and did not keep in close liaison with the government its value by virtue of that fact would be diminished.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes it would be, but I would suggest that governments in a country like ours are dependent upon public opinion for their existence, and they could not very well stand up against the fact that they had set up an advisory committee which they never called together, or an advisory committee whose advice they did not try to follow where possible. Each time that the chairman of the committee already discussed has suggested that we might have a meeting, we have arranged to have it. I was very agreeably—I will not say surprised, because this is what I expected would happen—affected by the fact that this committee has never asked to be brought together at expense to the government except at times when it was important that they should be here. For example, when this bill was coming up, they thought it was important that they should be here during this week, and they suggested that they would like to convene here around July 26. We said: All right, convene. The committee was called together. That is the basis on which we have been working. It is the basis upon which we can continue to work no matter what government is here, and if that practice is continued the producers will have adequate representation in connection with this kind of legislation.

There is one other thing I would like to call to the attention of the house, and that is the great variations in farm income over a period of years. I have before me a sheet which is got out by the statistics branch from time to time, showing the gross agricultural cash income, that is the receipts from the sale of farm products, over a period of years. I should like to read a few of these figures in order to impress upon the minds of hon. members the great variations that there are in the cash income of farmers in Canada as between one year and another and one period and another.

The average annual gross cash income of farmers all across Canada during 1926 to

[Mr. Gardiner.]

1929 was \$970.5 million. The highest figure that we have ever reached down to the present war period was \$1,063.8 million in 1928. The lowest figure we have ever had during a period extending back over many years beyond what this table shows was \$383.5 million in the year 1932. We have gradually come up from that point until in the year just before the war, in 1939, it was \$722.3 million. It was not until 1942 that there was a considerable increase above that. It is true that we were up by about \$200 million in 1941, but in 1942 the income rose to the highest figure on these records up to that time, \$1,114.9 million, or approximately \$1,115 million. In 1943 the gross cash farm income was \$1,396.6 million. In the present year through which we are now passing the gross cash farm income for the first six months was twenty-five per cent higher right across Canada than it was in the first half of last year. So that if that continues on until the end of the year, and the tendency is for it to run higher during the last half of the year, it would be at least twenty-five per cent higher than that.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: They delivered the grain in the first six months of 1944.

Mr. GARDINER: They will deliver a lot more in the last half of this year than last, because they have a better crop this year than last year. But I was going to refer to that in a moment, in order to deal with something else. I wish hon. members would take these sheets and go back over the years showing the variations in income in the different provinces. It will be found, for example, that one of the reasons why we had a gross cash farm income of \$1,063 million in 1928 was that that was the biggest year of wheat production in the history of this country down to 1942, and along with that high production we had high prices. The income that year was higher than in the year before or in the year following. The gross cash farm income in 1927 was \$934 million; in 1928, \$1,063 million; in 1929, \$926 million. It dropped right back in 1929 to about where it was in 1927. The increases shown in this table were due to the fact that there was an increase in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, where this wheat comes from. But as I said at the beginning, wheat does not come under this bill, and I make that observation in order to point out that if one were going to take the comparable figures in the different provinces over a period of years one would have to allow for the fact that under this bill we are dealing with the other products rather than wheat.