

Supply—Agriculture

Mr. Horner (Acadia): You tell them all about it; you are a big farmer.

Mr. Lambert: You know so much about it, of course.

Mr. Howard: About what?

Mr. Lambert: The problems of farmers.

Mr. Argue: When are you going to make your speech?

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Did the hon. member for Assiniboia write your speech?

Mr. Howard: The difficulty at moments like this is that hon. gentlemen opposite are so eager to snatch an opportunity to say something that they jump all at once and it is impossible to make sense of their remarks and determine if any are deserving of comment. They all jump at a chance to speak and it is impossible to sort out the confused chorus that results.

We have been discussing the first item of the estimates of the Minister of Agriculture for approximately four or five days. It would seem to me that the length of the debate would certainly indicate that there is something basically wrong with the attitude of the government toward the farming people. We have had references to the farming problems of the people of the maritime provinces, of Ontario and the prairie provinces, and some reference to the farming people of the province of British Columbia. Many members have entered into the debate. That itself should indicate that everything had not been solved by the Minister of Agriculture and by his friend the Prime Minister.

We have heard some reference to the delegation of farmers who were here recently from the prairie provinces and the reason why the farm delegation was here. I would suggest that the basic difficulty is that they require and need for their own sustenance a fair share of the national wealth. That is primarily what they were interested in. Hon. members on the government side can confuse it as to which way is the best way of doing it, by deficiency payments, by dollar payments per acre on a handout basis, or in other ways, but the basic problem is that they have not sufficient income to maintain themselves, their families and their farms and to keep them up. Obviously, something is wrong or 1,100 to 1,200 farming people from the prairie provinces would not have come here carrying with them a petition signed by over 300,000 people. Surely, they could not have just come down for the trip, as has been indicated by some hon. members.

These complaints that we hear, Mr. Chairman, about the participation of the C.C.F. in providing some sort of welcome for them as they got off the train are very amusing.

[Mr. Howard.]

I suggest it is nothing more than jealousy and sour grapes on the part of hon. members who are evincing nothing today but old Toryism. How many Conservative members were there? I know no one will admit it, of course, but the Conservative members expressed this thought the following morning—and I heard some of them say it—"Gee, I wish we had thought of something like that".

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Howard: All right.

Mr. Ricard: Imagination.

Mr. Howard: Perhaps my friends the Conservatives wished they were like the Liberals who did not have anybody there at all.

Mr. Pearson: That is not true.

Mr. Howard: I will say this. The C.C.F. were there, certainly, out in the open with placards, in a sincere, warm way—

An hon. Member: With bands.

Mr. Howard: My hon. friend says "with bands" but what we did not do was put on a booze party for them.

Mr. Ricard: You had no money.

Mr. Howard: Neither did you give them anything else, and you do not intend to. We did not pour out the liquor; we did not cart them into a back room and try to push aside their complaints and say, "Never mind about the problems of the farmers; have another drink; have another shot of scotch or rye", or whatever it was they had, no sir.

Mr. Henderson: Pretty cheap.

Mr. Howard: My hon. friend says, "cheap politics". He ought to know about cheap politics; he is sitting in a government with over 200 cheap politicians.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. Perhaps the hon. member might reconsider that remark.

Mr. Howard: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I will reconsider it. I thank you for suggesting it and I hope that your suggestion that I reconsider it will be applied to the hon. member who made the interjection in the first instance; for I am sure that rulings of the Chair must be equally applicable to all members in the house.

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Argue: Shame on an equal ruling?

Mr. Howard: That is Toryism for you. They want this ruling to apply to one hon. member but not to somebody else. To those people who raise complaints about the farm delegation and about the participation by the C.C.F., I say again it is nothing but sour grapes and jealousy, and they are promoting this day after day, that farmers did not come down here wanting anything. They did not