

is in the test tube. Well, as I have said before in this house, I have had a lifetime of experience in farming. I speak as a farmer, for the farmer, and I do not take a back seat to anyone in this house on that count. I have also had some preliminary training in chemistry, so that I know when people are talking a little science and when they are talking bunk. Most of it to-day is bunk; there is plenty of that.

What have we to do? I am not speaking of the war; for that is a totally different thing. War is hell, and just now we have to endure hell. I am speaking of the long-range programme, after the war is over, when surely we shall have a happier world, which means a better-fed world. Why has it been possible in the past to raise the food but impossible to distribute it? It is not a question of production but one of distribution, and in that connection you have to look not in the test tubes but in the ledgers of the bankers. Personally I have very little faith in so-called scientists; I think we need more hard-headed, common, horse sense. I think first the world has to learn—and people may laugh at it if they wish, but it is the truth and the war proves it—that under orthodox economics or orthodox finance or orthodox business or the orthodox price system it is impossible for the producer to distribute enough money to sell what he produces. That is why the consumer must be financed directly. If that were done the farmer would have no fear of not finding a ready market for everything he could produce. It is not a question of demand; the demand is there. It stands to reason that if people are underfed and undernourished, there is a demand for food; but the fact is that this demand is not effective because there is not enough money distributed to make it effective. So that rather than confess to ourselves that we have been blind in the past; rather than admit any mistakes on our part, the only solution we can see is to put our so-called scientists to work in order to spoil food and render it unfit for human consumption. If I might make a plea on behalf of the farmer—and I speak at present for the farmers as well as the rest of the people of Canada—it would be that we would put some real economists to work on the problem, so that in the end we could make financially possible anything that is physically possible. We have done that during the war, and the only reason we have done it is that in war time the canons of sound finance are silenced by the cannons of the enemy.

Mr. BLACKMORE: May I associate myself with both hon. members who have preceded me? It is true that we ought to have the west industrialized a great deal more than it

is, and in that respect I agree entirely with the hon. member for Calgary West. I believe it is also true that we are going to deal more in the field of plastics and synthetic products than we have in the past.

I was shown through a plant on one occasion, and it was clearly demonstrated to me that first-class houses could be made out of potatoes. That was one example of the extent to which potatoes can be processed. The hon. member for Wetaskiwin would feel that that was a wastage of good food. I will grant that if there is a demand for that food, it should be used as food. But it is conceivable that our productive capacity in relation to potatoes will increase, and potatoes might go bad for lack of buyers. Under such circumstances it would surely be better to process them into something valuable.

I wish to ask the minister one or two questions with respect to the production of alcohol from wheat. What has been the experience in the manufacture of alcohol from durum wheat, or have any experiments been made?

Mr. GARDINER: It would be about the same. There might be a slight difference, but not much.

Mr. BLACKMORE: What has been the experience in connection with sixth grade wheat?

Mr. GARDINER: The closer it gets to 60 cents a bushel, in other words the lower the grade of the wheat used, the greater the possibility of producing alcohol from it. But what I said at the beginning is still true, that western farmers are not anxious to sell even low-grade wheat at less than 60 cents a bushel.

Mr. BLACKMORE: What has been done with respect to potatoes? Have any experiments been made to discover whether rubber can be made from alcohol extracted from potatoes?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, there have been experiments in that connection. The cost is very much lower with potatoes than it is with wheat.

Mr. BLACKMORE: In the course of our travels in England in 1941 we visited the university at Cambridge, and I was much impressed by some things I was told there. We were told about certain kinds of potatoes which were very large and misshapen, but it looked as though they might be developed to the point where the yield would be enormous. If we could find a type of potato from which we could extract alcohol under suitable conditions, we might be able to manufacture rubber from potatoes, and do it successfully.