

Yet when the workers in the farm implement industry appeared before the cabinet the other day and pointed out how acute their problem was they were told in part that they had priced themselves out of the market—a point which I shall deal with later—or, on the other hand, that they ought to move on to other areas where there was work.

The fact remains that today a worker who has been stationed in an area for some time with his wife and family in all probability has an equity in a home. He has established his family life in that area, and now he is being asked to break it up, to move to some other area with no guarantee that he will get what he paid for his house or even part of it, and with no guarantee at all that there will be housing available in the area to which he may go. Perhaps he and the rest of his family will have to live apart for many months. That is not an answer to the problem.

The most important thing about the brief presented by the steel workers and the united automobile workers on behalf of those engaged in the farm implement industry was the realization that labour in the city and the worker on the farm are interdependent. The more the farmer gets in income the more he is able to buy of that which the city worker produces. In reverse it is exactly the same. The higher wages the city worker gets the more he is going to buy from the farmer. The city worker and the farm worker are completely interdependent despite all the ideas of those who try to drive a wedge between the two, to split them up and keep them separate. Their fundamental interests are the same, yet the government has no answer except to tell the city worker that wages are too high and he has priced himself out of the market.

What are the facts? They were given in the brief submitted by the workers in the farm implement industry. In 1946 there were 51 plants in the farm implement industry; in 1951 there were 81 plants. In 1946 there were 11,548 wage earners; in 1951 there were 14,078. There had been an increase of 22 per cent in the number of wage earners. In 1946 the wages paid amounted to \$20,038,000; in 1951 the wages paid amounted to \$41,490,000, an increase of 107 per cent.

The gross value of production in that industry in 1946 was \$63,239,000; in 1951 the gross value of production had risen to \$171,172,000, an increase of 170 per cent. Or to put it another way, in 1946 the average worker earned \$1,735 and produced \$5,476 worth of goods whereas in 1951 he earned an average of \$2,947 and produced \$12,159 worth of goods.

I would say that in the face of such figures those who maintain that the workers are pricing themselves out of jobs do not know the facts of the situation. Earlier in the debate the minister said that those industries in which there was the greatest proportionate increase in wages were the ones which were affected most. I do not think that applies in this industry. It is not without significance to note that the profits of this industry increased by 224 per cent between 1946 and 1951.

The workers in that industry know very well that they are interdependent with the farmer. They know very well that if the farmers are well off they are going to have employment. They know that if the farmers are up against it, then the workers in the city will be up against it. They pointed out in this brief that between 1950 and 1951 the net income of farmers fell by 11 per cent or \$240 million. When you compare the price index of agricultural products of July, 1951, and August, 1953, you find that it fell from 308 to 240, or 22 per cent.

All this brings home once again the fact that if the primary producers in this country are beginning to find the economic going rough, then the rest of us are going to suffer. In no small measure prosperity in this country depends upon the well-being of our primary producers. What then can we do to help them in such a way that it will reflect favourably on the employment figures of this country?

I have a suggestion to offer. We have in this country one of the greatest surpluses of wheat ever known. We have in the world two-thirds of the population going to bed hungry. We have suggested on more than one occasion that 200 million bushels of wheat should be given to those who need food today and cannot get it. From the selfish point of view it would pay us hand over fist; from the humanitarian point of view it would do more to win the cold war than anything else I can think of.

I may be asked where the money is going to come from. The government already has the money. There is a fund—I will not call it a slush fund; it is not that—a very tidy little hidden reserve tucked away in the Department of National Defence amounting to some \$300 million which is still unexpended. In the economic cold war there would be no greater protection for Canada than to use that money to buy wheat to send to those who need food. It would be a good thing from every point of view. It would put purchasing power into the hands of our farmers, and that purchasing power in turn would be reflected in the industrial economy of this country.