

policy. How many times must it be pointed out to this government that the farmer cannot plan for to-morrow with only a policy laid down for to-day? That is putting it in bold terms.

Subsidies have been paid; but in many instances they have not been paid in time or they have been too small. Because of that, pressure has been put upon the ceiling from time to time, and encouragement has almost been given to a black market.

Without making a blanket criticism of the wartime prices and trade board, which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) champions—he is watching me carefully and is noting every word I am saying on this subject—I think it is fair to say that its operations, so far as they affect farm products, have fallen far short of success. While the price ceiling programme has its advantages, a method of price control which results in shortages otherwise avoidable, endangers in my opinion the whole principle of the programme itself. The bald fact is that the farmers are belligerently dissatisfied with the present administration of the programme by the wartime prices and trade board. Having this well in mind, the government, in my opinion, would be well advised, and I strongly urge them, to set up without delay a food ministry in Canada. It would appear that only by this change of policy, for which there are examples in Great Britain and the United States, can there be any hope for a coordinated plan of production and distribution of farm products.

The wartime prices and trade board is not adequately equipped in its membership to handle efficiently these two problems, which automatically, if not officially, come within their jurisdiction—that is, production and distribution. It could never have been intended that the operation of the wartime prices and trade board should reach so far into the realm of production and distribution of the products of the farm. In my opinion, time must not be wasted in making this change if an abundance of food is to be produced for the varied requirements of a country at war. Looking further ahead, it seems to me that unless this problem of agricultural production is tackled now we are going to be faced with an even more serious problem than that of wartime shortages itself.

Our great leaders have said that when this war is over, we, with the other great producing countries of the world, will be under obligation to feed a war-torn hungry world to which peace will have come. If we do not develop our agricultural economy and production in such a manner as to enable us to do that, are we playing fair with the coun-

[Mr. Graydon.]

tries to whom we have given that guarantee? We must have some plan for agriculture, and prepare it at once, which will meet the conditions which lie ahead. I believe I voice the opinion of a great majority of the farmers of Canada when I say that the government has failed to provide adequate measures whereby Canadian agriculture can make its maximum war contribution and receive a fair share of the national income.

Before leaving agriculture I want to make another suggestion. I shall not enter into any extended discussion this afternoon with respect to wheat; that can come later. But I do wish to mention a significant Canadian press dispatch which was carried in many of the papers this morning, emanating from the annual convention of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture at Calgary on Saturday last. It indicates that some improvement in the liaison between the agricultural organizations and the government is required. For that reason and for no other I read the following item:

Farm federation protests Ottawa's
1943 grain policy

Calgary, January 31.—Delegates to the annual convention of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture observed one minute's silence at their closing session Saturday in protest against the federal government's action in announcing its 1943 grain policy before consulting representatives of organized agriculture.

Main point of the announced wheat policy provides for the maximum delivery of fourteen bushels per authorized acre for the 1943-44 crop at a basic price of ninety cents a bushel.

The convention also sent protest telegrams to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, Agriculture Minister Gardiner and Mr. MacKinnon.

The wire said delegates regarded the action "as an indication of the government's intention completely to disregard the viewpoint of organized farm producers of Canada."

It said further that for the past two years directors and officers of the C.F.A. had met with the Prime Minister and government members immediately following their annual meeting. "This has provided an opportunity for farm representatives to bring before the government the considered opinion of organized agriculture from coast to coast dealing with its problems."

The telegram added:

"On previous occasions the Prime Minister and members of the government have stated that they welcome the presentation of our views. . . . We believe that at no time in the country's history has the need been greater for the closest possible cooperation between government and people.

"This will be impossible to attain if government creates impression that it proposes to ignore reasonable representations of organized producers.

"If the 1943 food goals as recently announced by Canadian government are to be met, some upward revision of the income from grain should be considered."