

We have a surplus of wheat. I am not concerned about the possibility that that surplus will last very long. Once the war is over it will melt like the proverbial snowball. But I believe that two, three or four years after this war is over we shall be confronted with a surplus situation; and rather than depend on our ability to get rid of wheat as such, I should like to think that this country is employing the best scientific brains and ability available to find other products which can be economically produced in western Canada, or other means or uses for the products which are now produced in such enormous quantities. I believe that the answer is to be found in the brains and the test tubes of our young scientists. But having made it my business, in common with certain other western members to canvass the situation with the national research council—and these excellent gentlemen are doing a mighty fine work in that institution—I am impressed by this consideration: from the very fact that that institution is located here in the heart of industrial Canada, it is pressed more with the problems of industrial eastern Canada than with the urgency or the necessity of scientific research to find means of processing and making from our agricultural and other primary resources, new products and discovering or devising new uses for our agricultural and other natural products.

I hope that as a result of what has been said in the last few days under this particular item, the government—I have no doubt as to what the minister feels about it—will accede to the request of the agricultural representatives and see to it that, either under the Minister of Agriculture there are set up across this dominion laboratories manned by scientific men whose primary function shall be to discover new uses for our agricultural products, or else fresh emphasis shall be laid on that field of research with which our national research council is also charged. To my way of thinking the industrialists and manufacturers of eastern Canada, or of Canada as a whole if you will, are getting the benefit of the scientific brains and research work of the research council to a much greater extent than the primary producers. I do not say this has been to the detriment of those producers, but I do say the needs of industry are being over-emphasized as compared to the needs of our producers, who themselves individually are not impressed by the need for scientific research and study in the same way or to the same extent that the big manufacturing institutions of this dominion are.

I for one would be very much disappointed if something did not come out of this discussion which has been deliberately precipitated by thoughtful members of this house on both sides, who have no selfish motives or ideas but are trying to further the welfare of the country as a whole. At least that is my purpose, and I give the same credit to other hon. members who have spoken on this subject. Naturally I think of my own province, which is perhaps the only province in Canada which has a surplus of electrical energy, to say nothing of the coal and oil potentials with which to manufacture and process the natural products of the prairies. I look to the minister, as I am sure all agriculturists of western Canada look to him, as our champion, to find new ways and methods of using our products. I believe this will have to be done, and I think the answer will be found in the test tube and the scientifically trained men. I trust that never again will this item be the small, picayune thing it is now, in dollars and cents, having regard to the magnitude of the problem with which we are and shall be confronted in western Canada.

Mr. JAUQUES: This question of surplus foods is no new thing; it is a very old question. Of course as the minister said—and I like to think of the Minister of Agriculture as having one of the hardest heads in Canada—if we look at this question from the point of view of the war, then we may take one attitude towards it; but if we take the long view as to what is to be our policy after the war is over, then that is something entirely different.

Hon. members have said that the great problem is to set scientists at work to find the most scientific methods of spoiling as much human food as possible—that is what it amounts to—because we have or will have a so-called surplus. In the interval between the two wars there were millions of people all over the world who were underfed and undernourished. I believe it has been stated by the chief government medical health officer in Great Britain that over fifty per cent of the people of that country are underfed and undernourished, and I am perfectly certain that Britain's record is not worse than that of any other country. I have not the figures; I cannot carry them in my head anyway, but I believe the situation is even worse in the United States. Yet when people were literally starving, farmers actually were being paid not to raise hogs, to plough up their potatoes, and to do all sorts of absurd things. Now we are told that the solution