

In my opinion the Minister of Agriculture has one of the most important positions to fill in the cabinet. It is hard for an outsider or for one on the street to realize just how important this portfolio is, and just how many departments are under his guidance. I am sure every hon. member of the house, on the opposition as well as on the government side, will agree with me when I say that the Minister of Agriculture has carried on his work diligently and sincerely, and has advocated a stabilized price control which will secure and guarantee the primary producer a market which he can depend on for some years to come.

Let me mention some of the divisions of the Department of Agriculture to give you some idea of the magnitude of the minister's task. They include the agricultural food board, price board, agricultural supplies board, meat board, special products board, science service, division of animal pathology, disease research division, bacteriology, botany and plant pathology, chemistry, entomology, division of plant protection, experimental farm service, prairie farm assistance, production service, live stock and poultry division, marketing service, and prairie farm assistance consumers service. I could go on almost indefinitely. All these are run efficiently to the benefit of the whole country under the guiding hand of the Minister of Agriculture. I believe it would be far better for the country as a whole if some of his critics were to go back to their constituencies with the real story of the outstanding contribution that that same Minister of Agriculture is making to the whole of Canada.

There has been a drive by the Winnipeg grain exchange to defy the government's price control policy. They have spent money like water spreading propaganda in every newspaper entitled, "Who dares speak for you, Mr. Prairie Farmer?" advocating higher prices to be more on a par with those in other countries. How long would the price remain stabilized if they had control? How long did they remain controlled after the last war? It would seem that they are making a definite challenge to defy the stabilized long term agreements which the government is advocating. I hope the western farmer will see the real facts behind this propaganda which has been distributed, and I hope that those who have marketed their grain through the Canadian wheat board realize what an effort has been made by the wheat pools and other cooperative agencies to establish a stabilized market. Furthermore I hope the western farmer has not lost sight of or forgotten the equalization payments which he has received and is still receiving from the present government.

[Mr. Sinnott.]

I should like to give a few items from a table which I have here to show what the western farmer has received since 1943 in wheat acreage bonuses. These payments were as follows:

	1943	1944	1945
Manitoba . . . . .	\$ 5,053,000	\$ 706,000	\$133,000
Saskatchewan . . . . .	17,091,000	5,341,000	262,000
Alberta . . . . .	8,872,000	2,934,000	427,000

The payments for prairie farm assistance were as follows:

	1944	1945
Manitoba . . . . .	\$ 17,000	\$ 164,000
Saskatchewan . . . . .	6,907,000	2,639,000
Alberta . . . . .	2,533,000	2,815,000

That is quite a contribution that the government has made to those provinces, but some of those provinces do not appreciate it. No one would like better to see higher prices on all produce and grain than the present government, but in order for our customers to buy over a long period we must make the price attractive enough to discourage the countries from producing grain so that we may accept their commodities.

Let us look at the inflationary trend in other countries. Take even the United States or even England. Those in the lower income brackets are having a terrible time to survive.

Through you, sir, I would like to say a word about the dominion-provincial conference. Some three years ago a plan was submitted to all provincial governments and municipalities for the post-war reconversion period. This complied with plans, and preparations were made accordingly. Then came the first meeting of the dominion-provincial conference, ending in failure; then the second meeting without any further results, and then a third meeting with two of the nine provinces in agreement with the dominion's proposal.

I have in my hand a report from the Winnipeg *Free Press* that Manitoba has now accepted the dominion's proposal, and Mr. Garson's comment is that he is sorry that an April meeting was not agreed to by all parties. As he says:

Canadians should understand, however, that the budget speech proposal is much less advantageous than the modified proposal made by the dominion to the conference in April which was then accepted by Manitoba and some other provinces but rejected by certain provinces. The dominion's April proposal provided a plan for the coordination of dominion and provincial policies designed to maximize employment and income, and thus to reduce taxation as a percentage of national income.

It relieved provinces and municipalities of the major portion of unemployment relief costs. It provided substantially increased federal aid for pensions, social welfare and public health. It gave definite assurance of dominion aid to the construction of national highways and access roads to undeveloped resources, and to provincial and municipal public works timed to stabilize employment and business conditions.