

The Budget—Mr. Douglas (Weyburn)

means only that the farmers enter into competition with one another, to depress their own price.

We therefore ask that this year the Canadian wheat board should take delivery of all the wheat marketed this fall and that it should take delivery of that wheat at a price which shall be commensurate with the cost of production.

I have before me figures prepared by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics which help to show what the return has been to the farmer in western Canada for his wheat. These are the average prices received at point of production, per bushel:

	Average price received per bushel
1908 to 1913, inclusive.....	.71
1914 to 1918 (war years), inclusive	1.37
1919 to 1929, inclusive.....	1.06
1908 to 1930, inclusive.....	.90 $\frac{3}{4}$
1908 to 1938, inclusive (but eliminating war years).....	.84
1908 to 1938, inclusive (but eliminating depression years).....	1.06
1908 to 1939, inclusive (but eliminating both war years and depression years).....	.98
1930 to 1938, inclusive (depression years)56
1938-39 cereal year.....	.59

The figure for the last crop year, 1939-40, shows that the farmer got 49 cents a bushel at point of production. These figures indicate that the 30-year average wheat price is 90 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents a bushel. With costs on the upper trend, the western farmer is facing sure financial loss with the price of his crop at 49 cents a bushel at the farm, as it was last year.

I cannot impress upon the house too forcibly that this is the condition of the western farmer. Almost everything he has to buy has gone up or is going up in price, and the 10 per cent foreign exchange tax imposed by the budget is bound to affect certain kinds of farm implements. He is already paying more for his farm implements than he was paying a few years ago, and by virtue of the 10 per cent tax he is now going to have to pay more. With his costs steadily going up and his income steadily declining, it is absolutely impossible for the wheat producer to carry on unless the government is prepared to fix a price for his wheat which would bear some direct relation to the cost of production. We ask the government at this session without further delay to bring down an amendment to the Canadian Wheat Board Act which will provide for the farmer a reasonable price for the 1940 wheat crop.

[Mr. T. C. Douglas.]

I now come to the fourth and last recommendation, and it is this, that during this session the government should announce its policy with respect to the marketing of products other than wheat. Agriculture cannot continue in war time, any more than in peace time, on an unplanned basis. Whether the government likes it or not, it is going to be forced into the marketing of farm products; in fact, it has been forced already. It has already been compelled to take steps with reference to the marketing of bacon. It has already been compelled to come to the assistance of the apple growers.

Mr. GARDINER: Not compelled; we chose to do it.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Compelled by circumstances.

Mr. GARDINER: But we chose to do it.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Compelled to do it, because it helped the people who were growing the apples. Are we going to wait until other industries are bankrupt, or is the government now prepared to outline a broad marketing policy to take care of the handling of agricultural products for the duration of the war.

With that in mind we ask two things: First, that the inoperative clause in the Canadian Wheat Board Act be made operative, or that it shall be invoked so as to permit the wheat board to take delivery of coarse grains.

Second, we ask that with all possible dispatch the government set up boards for the marketing of other agricultural products, and that it pay to the producers parity prices for those products. When I say "parity" prices, I do not mean parity prices to the shipper or to the exporter or to the packing house; I mean parity prices to the man on the farm who produces the goods. That is the only place where a parity price can be of any use.

Someone says: "But that sort of thing will take money, and world markets are dwindling." That is true. It may be necessary, as the hon. member for Qu'Appelle has suggested, that we shall have to store wheat in this country, and that we may have to make it economically worth while for the farmer to store wheat on his own farm. We may have to build facilities to store wheat in Canada. I would remind hon. members that already outstanding economists are telling us that long before this war is over, parts of the world will be facing starvation. If, when the war is over, we have to choose between having piles of gold stored up, as they have been in the great republic to the south of us, and having great quantities of wheat stored up, I