

living in this country who had been farming during the period of the last war should anticipate that they would make very substantial profits out of this war. During the early thirties our farmers took extremely heavy losses, and when war came they thought they would have an opportunity of making good those losses by substantial profits during the present war period. It was only human nature that they should arrive at that conclusion. But this country decided upon an all-out war effort, and the necessities of that war effort precluded anything of this nature taking place. During the last war Canada's main contribution was the men in our armed forces. We did have substantial war production, but it was limited as to type, and any surplus we produced in this country was sold at a profit. When war broke out in 1939 the Canadian people decided that this time we would have an all-out effort; this time we were to mobilize wealth as well as man-power, and that has been done. Our production has not been confined to shells and foodstuffs. We have built and equipped a Canadian navy and a Canadian air force. We have produced not only shells for our army but practically a full range of modern army equipment; tanks, planes, guns and the like. This time we have given to our allies, under mutual aid, all our surplus production. When we planned an all-out war effort it necessarily followed that prices had to be controlled if we were to avoid a spiral of inflation which would be ruinous to that effort. So that instead of allowing agricultural prices to rise as they did in the previous war we have controlled prices, and by the payment of subsidies have tried to give our farmers reasonable prices, and only reasonable prices for their products. But we have treated everyone alike; we have done the same to industry. We have restricted the profits of industry through the excess profits tax. We do not tax the excess profits; we take them all, and that is as it should be.

As a result of the fact that the farmers were denied the prices they expected they would have, some of them in my part of the country are blaming the Minister of Agriculture for letting them down. Nothing could be further from the truth, and nothing could be more unfair. Then, too, some people in Ontario are criticizing the minister because they say he represents western Canada and does not understand the problems of Ontario and eastern Canada. Once again I say nothing could be further from the truth and nothing could be more unfair. It is true that the minister represents a western riding and that for many years he was premier of Saskatchewan, but it is equally true that he was born and

brought up in Ontario, and that he is operating a farm in this province. I do not think we could find anywhere in this country a man more conversant with all branches and details of agriculture across the entire country than the present Minister of Agriculture. Fortunately, however, I do not need to rely upon my own opinion; the facts speak for themselves. Notwithstanding the fact that we have recruited something over 500,000 men from agriculture for our armed forces and war industries, our agricultural production since the outbreak of war has gone up and up until to-day it is more than fifty per cent greater than before the war.

As to the charge of favouritism to western Canada, I should like to cite one instance of which I have personal knowledge. As hon. members know, the fruit and vegetable industry has special problems of its own. In this instance I know the facts, because I live in the centre of a fruit and vegetable producing district, and I want to tell the house that the fruit and vegetable growers in my district are truly prosperous to-day. I admit at once that they are well organized, and that from time to time they have given the minister good advice. But that does not detract one whit from the fact that he has taken that advice and that in every instance he has been more than fair to this specialized branch of the industry of agriculture of which I have personal knowledge. It is inevitable that in times of price controls, rationing, and so forth, grievances and emergency conditions should arise from time to time. Individual groups of producers in this country have often been annoyed at the minister and at this government because of some incident that has touched them for the time being. But I would urge that we look at the over-all picture of what this country has done in time of war in the production of foodstuffs; and, looking at that over-all picture, I think we have a right to be very proud of the industry of agriculture in Canada. I think we have a right to be equally proud of our Minister of Agriculture and of the staff which has assisted him to bring about these results in Canadian agriculture. And so I say that so long as the present Minister of Agriculture is in the saddle, to organize that industry properly, I have high hopes for its future.

In the bill before us we have a scientific weapon which will take care of the post-war transition period. I should like to see that measure continue on. I think the rest is up to the producers themselves. Under this bill ample provision has been made for the producers to express their views and to give their advice to the minister and the department.