

absence of any amount required for the Canadian National Railways, which so far as this government is concerned may be regarded as an accident, the reduction is only one per cent. Surely the Minister of Finance did not have in mind that kind of drastic change in the habits and modes of life of the people of Canada, because I can tell him that there are in Canada, and in my riding particularly—and I was glad to hear a member to my left say something about this—working men who in their factories, in the war savings campaign, have regularly subscribed to the extent of one hundred per cent of the personnel.

In many factories the entire payroll of employees has pledged its support, and that means much more than one or even four per cent of their wages. Contrast that with a reduction of only four per cent in the estimates. I was hoping, and I say this in no spirit of carping criticism, that the government would in the estimates themselves give some kind of leadership to the people of Canada as an example of what the government expected of the average citizen in furtherance of our war effort, many of whom are contributing from their own pockets a much larger percentage than one or even four per cent of their weekly incomes.

Turning to another subject, the problem of agriculture is more clearly before the minds of the people of Canada to-day than it has been in the last fifty years of Canadian history. There must be many members of the house who know what the ordinary man is saying about agriculture to-day. Yet we have sat in the house from Monday, when the session was resumed, until Thursday, and not a word has been said by the government as to what it proposes to do to solve the agricultural problems of Canada as a whole. Where are the members of this house? Where is the government? Where is the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner)? Have they nothing to say on a problem that looms so large in Canadian economy as agriculture? But, you may say, this is purely a domestic peace-time problem. I deny that with all the emphasis at my command. Perhaps at one stage in our history agriculture may have been regarded as a domestic and peace-time problem, but to-day, whether you recognize it or not, the whole industry of agriculture is tied up with the efficiency of our war effort. Surely the government have not forgotten that not more than two or three weeks ago there were meetings of agriculturists interested in all branches of agriculture in this dominion who, by resolution and otherwise, pleaded with the government for some real approach to a solution of the problems not only of western agriculture but of eastern agriculture as well. Those resolu-

[Mr. Graydon.]

tions must have been forwarded to the government and considered in cabinet council. Surely the government must know that there is not a moment to be lost in dealing with the present-day problems of Canadian agriculture.

I wanted to say to the Minister of Agriculture, who I am exceedingly sorry is not in his seat—and on that account I may curtail what I had intended to say—that it is time we had a full-time dominion minister of agriculture. I am not suggesting for a moment that if the government believe the present Minister of Agriculture is good enough, he should not be left there. But at least give him a chance to give his undivided attention to agriculture, rather than dividing his attention between two portfolios in time of war. Either the ministry of national war services should not have been set up as a separate ministry, or else it is of sufficient importance to require a separate minister. A full-time minister of agriculture is one of the things that agriculturists all over the dominion are demanding of the government.

I know personally something about the situation of agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture was kind enough to say that by no stretch of the imagination could I be called a farmer. I retorted in kind during the last session, and I repeat it now. But at the same time I will take a back seat to no one in this house in my interest in agriculture and in my endeavour to do something for the agriculturist in my section and in every part of this dominion. First, he receives low prices for his produce; second, he pays high prices for the things he has to buy. Further, there is to-day available very little farm help which is really good. The scarcity of farm help is not a matter of wages; it is difficult to get farm help even if the highest rate of wages prevailing at the time on the farm is offered.

In view of this disparity between receipts and payments, the problem of farm help and wages, and the general situation as regards farming, it is not much to be wondered at that there was an uproar from one end of Canada to the other when, not so long ago, the dominion government decided to peg the price of butter. It may be all very well to argue that from a technical point of view there was some justification for pegging the price of butter; but the average farmer believes, and I am inclined to think he is right, that if you are going to put a ceiling on the price of one of the major products of the farm, there is no reason under the sun why he cannot properly ask that the prices of the commodities he has to buy, which are going up in price, should also be pegged to a ceiling. That applies to everything he has to buy, from his fertilizers to his concentrates; yes, and his