

*Supply—Agriculture*

threatened community life in the prairies. Indeed, I would not be surprised if the very people who presented this petition and brief should find it necessary to come back in less than 10 years and beg us to solve the problems created by bigger and bigger grain farms. The preservation of the family farm and of the unit of average size is good for the community. A diversified program on such farms deserves encouragement, just as much encouragement as straight grain growing.

This difference of opinion, which I understand is torturing the minds of thinking people on the prairies, is a good thing at this time. For this reason the campaign for signatures, and the coming of the delegation, can be justified. No one need feel embarrassed unless he deserves to feel embarrassed. That goes for those who sponsored this delegation as well as for those of us who serve here in parliament. Each of us has responsibilities to our people, and under our democratic system of government we will be called to account by those who sent us here.

For my part, I am satisfied that we placed before parliament our program pledged to protect the people just as soon as it was humanly and physically possible to interpret those pledges into measures worthy of the people and worthy of our future as a nation. The name of our Minister of Agriculture will go down in the annals of agricultural history because of his achievement in bringing before parliament agricultural stabilization bill No. 237. This is the bill the C.C.F. and the Liberals fear more than anything else this government has done. For the first time agricultural people in all parts of Canada have a common interest that serves to strengthen their understanding of each other's problems. The eyes of every farmer, and of many other people as well, follow the day to day administration of this act of parliament; and I venture the opinion, Mr. Chairman, that the stabilization bill will be recorded as one of those acts which brought Canadians closer to that spirit of unity which has been the cornerstone upon which farm people have built from the very earliest times.

On a number of occasions there has been reference to the delegation of people from western Canada to Ottawa. During the course of these remarks some compliments were paid to Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan institutions. There was the hon. member who thought the Saskatchewan wheat pool was to blame for the Liberals not having a sound agricultural policy. I have heard some fantastic reasons for their not having an agricultural policy, but I certainly do not think, sir, that the farmers of Saskatchewan deserve such an atrocious charge. Was it not the same Saskatchewan

wheat pool that organized the delegation to Ottawa in 1942? If my memory serves me correctly, the prime minister of that day was Right Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King, and the minister of agriculture was none other than Saskatchewan's own Right Hon. James Garfield Gardiner.

That delegation met that most Liberal of Liberal governments. The membership of the Saskatchewan wheat pool is composed of many people, and when the delegation was down here we saw former members of parliament, former members of the legislative assembly, members of all political parties and affiliations, and these people reserve the right, as do other like organizations, to meet the government regardless of the party in power. I recall one hon. member who thought the western farmers would be whipped into a frenzy. I attended the mass meeting at Saskatoon where over 2,000 people tried to crowd into the lobby and ballroom of the hotel Bessborough. I did not see any soap box orators. I did not see any wild gesturing. I did not hear any wild condemnation of this government or its policies. What I did hear was what I considered a well reasoned plea for unity in presenting the income problem of the western grain grower to parliament and the nation.

The platform on that occasion was graced by leaders of various religious denominations. Members of all parties were represented, even the member who formerly sat in this house for Rosthern constituency. His colleagues here in the opposition will be interested to know that he went to the platform with a smile, anticipating the embarrassment that the coming of the delegation and the holding of the meeting would cause the present government and the present member for Rosthern constituency. I need not remind hon. members of the opposition, whose faces were red, that the president of the Saskatchewan wheat pool traced the events that led to the sending of a delegation in 1942, and followed that presentation with a recital of the conditions that had existed in the interval since then which had placed grain growing in its greatest hour of challenge. The mayor of Saskatoon presided. The committee in charge invited me to sit on the platform but I declined that invitation, sir, with the assertion that I would remain with those among whom I number myself.

And who were these people who had come many miles on a winter day to hear the leaders of farm unions and wheat pools? Well, someone has said that they were the C.C.F. and the Liberals, and I must confess that there were those who would gladly cut our political throats if and when the opportunity presented