

a bushel. So in that year even if they wished to deliver their wheat to the wheat board, farmers were not permitted to do so while the price was above that figure.

In 1937 the same situation obtained. In 1938, on a falling market, the wheat board was again brought into operation. An initial payment of 80 cents, basis Fort William, was paid and participation certificates issued.

Last year, 1939, the government introduced what it called a new marketing policy, which gave to the wheat producer three alternative courses. He could (1) sell his wheat in the open market; (2) sell his wheat through a cooperative pool or association and receive an advance payment of 60 cents, basis Fort William, with a government guarantee behind it, or (3) sell his wheat to the wheat board and receive an initial guaranteed payment of 60 cents, and a participation certificate. Under pressure from all parts of western Canada that initial payment was later raised to 70 cents a bushel, and to offset the concession a limit of 5,000 bushels was imposed; in this way the farmer was not allowed to deliver over 5,000 bushels to the wheat board.

Now we come to 1940. With the outbreak of the war members of this group and of other opposition groups asked the government to close the Winnipeg grain exchange, pointing out that Great Britain and France were purchasing their wheat through one agent, and that Australia had nationalized its wheat and flour industry. This government refused to take such a step, and have allowed the question of a wheat marketing policy to drift month after month, until at last, a few weeks ago, when the wheat market was in a state of imminent collapse, they were finally compelled to step in and peg the price at seventy and a fraction cents, basis Fort William. Again the members of opposition groups asked the government to close the speculative market and take delivery of wheat through the wheat board.

At that time the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. MacKinnon) promised that a statement would be made, and said that the whole matter was under consideration. Then, a few weeks ago, without the house being taken into the confidence of the government, the public were informed through the press that the Winnipeg grain exchange was to continue until the end of the crop year, July 31. We have been waiting since May 16 for an announcement of policy. The minister has made another statement to-night. Still we have no intimation from the government as to what the wheat marketing policy of the government is to be for this crop year or for the years of the war. My object, therefore, in rising to support the contention of the hon.

[Mr. T. C. Douglas.]

member for Qu'Appelle is to ask the government that during this budget debate the ministers responsible shall make a statement to this house and to the country outlining clearly what their policy is not only with reference to the marketing of wheat but with reference to the marketing of all agricultural products.

On behalf of this group I want to make four requests of the government. First, I want to ask when they propose to set up the advisory committee to the wheat board. The wheat board act provides for that committee. It never should have been fired. In the first place it was abolished by this government because Mr. J. R. Murray, who was chairman of the wheat board, would not work with it. This government had to choose between Mr. Murray and producer representation on the wheat board, and they chose Mr. Murray. As a result the producers have had no representation since 1936; they have had no voice at all in the forming of a marketing policy for wheat. Now we ask the government to appoint that committee. During the election they promised to do so. The newspapers quoted both the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Trade and Commerce as saying that such a committee would be appointed. That committee should be appointed while this house is sitting, so that hon. members may know its personnel. The members of that committee should be appointed a sufficient time before the marketing of the 1940 crop to enable them to consult with each other and with the wheat board. How can they advise the wheat board unless they are appointed a sufficient time prior to the marketing of the 1940 crop to help formulate a policy?

We should know who will constitute that committee. It is understood that the committee will have producer representation. Does this mean that the organized wheat producers of western Canada are to have a voice in selecting that committee? Are the pools and the farm organizations to be consulted? Producer representation is a farce and a sham unless the organized producers of the west have some voice in selecting the men who are to speak for them on that advisory committee. The government owe it to themselves, to this house and to the farmers of western Canada to name that committee without further delay.

Second, I want to ask the government to tell us during this debate when they propose to bring down legislation to provide for an interim payment on the 1939 wheat crop. There has been some argument in this house with regard to statements made by the