

*Supply—Agriculture*

at low interest and in some cases as straight gifts. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that if the position of Canadian agriculture was explained to the Canadian people, if the seriousness of the situation in general was explained to the Canadian people as a whole, they would understandingly assume the burden of extra taxation required to finance such a program. That is all I am going to say in that respect at this time.

Before proceeding to make a few remarks concerning my own constituency, I want to emphasize my complete agreement with the remarks made by the hon. member for Melfort when he was dealing with the necessity for a long-term over-all agricultural policy in Canada. I readily recognize that during the war period such a policy could not be developed under abnormal conditions, but I do think it is necessary, and it can only spring from and be the result of much closer agreement and much closer co-operation between the federal and provincial governments. We need a long-term marketing policy worked out between the government. We need a long-term production policy. In going around my own district and other districts I am amazed to see—and I give credit to the scientific staffs of our departments of agriculture for the excellent work they have done—that necessary information does not reach all the people settled on the land. I find people, after all these years of experience, planting the wrong varieties of trees. I find people clearing land which should have been left in timber. I find people attempting to produce crops which are unsuitable, and as a result they gain their experience through unnecessary cost and labour. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I heartily support the hon. member for Melfort in his contention that we need a long-term over-all agricultural policy, devised as a result of joint and increasing co-operation between the federal and provincial governments.

I am going to deal with one or two things which are not strictly within the purview of the Minister of Agriculture. They come within his purview only in the sense that I think the minister is doing what he can as a member of the cabinet and within the cabinet to improve rural living conditions. We have to give every consideration to that if we are to keep our younger people on the land. I should like the Minister of Agriculture to use his influence toward doing all that is possible in the development of a trans-Canada highway, because if a trans-Canada highway is built across this country, and the provinces are assisted, not only will the food producers, the egg producers and others in many parts of this country have better roads to market their products, but the

[Mr. Herridge.]

provinces will have more money to surface and improve feeder roads. That is an important item when it comes to moving soft fruits and other commodities of that type in the constituency which I have the honour to represent.

In my constituency there are a large number of people living in isolated areas who get very poor radio reception. In fact, the only programs most of them enjoy in the evenings are American programs. I trust that the minister will use his influence within the cabinet to see not only that the urban dweller gets good radio reception but that people in the backwoods, people in the country, have every opportunity to enjoy Canadian programs.

Farmers of my district are concerned about the grading of hay and the inspection of cereals imported particularly from Alberta. I think without question there have been some quantities of low-grade hay, poor hay and very questionable feed imported from Alberta. The farmers I represent are anxious for me to bring that to the attention of the minister. They are urging increased inspection facilities so far as hay and feed commodities are concerned.

In addition to that, we find some of our people living in the backwoods who are trying to build houses. Some of them are log cabins, others of frame construction. They are really living a pioneer life under present-day conditions. During the last year or so they have found it very difficult to obtain baling wire and barbed wire. It has been almost impossible to obtain barbed wire, fence staples and things of that type for some time. I do hope that the Minister of Agriculture will use his influence within the cabinet to make certain that the first people who receive these things will be the rural people who are developing the backwoods areas of this country and need them badly.

The people I represent are also interested in the operation of the Canadian farm loan board. I made a forty-minute speech on this question in the session before last but I wish to refer briefly to the subject again. Personally I am still of the opinion that the Canadian farm loan board does not serve the pioneer in the backwoods communities to quite the same extent as it serves the well-developed communities. In my opinion these people are somewhat of the impression that the backwoods farm, where the farmer is making possibly, in the early years, 75 per cent of his living from the sale of logs, poles, cordwood, is not as good a risk, not as good an investment, as possibly a well-developed farm which is paying far higher taxes. The type of man who goes to the