

problem to handle in addition to his other duties, then I suggest that he consider turning over the portfolio of national war services to some other minister. After all, the farmers of this country look to the Minister of Agriculture, they do not point their fingers at the Minister of Trade and Commerce and expect him to find a solution to their problems. The Minister of Agriculture is the man who will receive blame, if there is blame, and he might as well assume all responsibility.

As far as the wheat policy is concerned, I suggest that the government has been derelict in its duty to this country in not placing its policy before the House of Commons long before the time it did, and in not bringing down the regulations long prior to the time it did.

We were told when we came here last fall that the government's wheat policy would be announced in February. I think it was the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. MacKinnon) who made that statement. We came here on the 17th of February, and there was no wheat policy. Day after day the question was asked in the house as to when the government's wheat policy might be expected, but the policy was not announced to the house until the twelfth of March, and not until the second of April did we get the regulations. I do not think that is being fair to this house or to the farmers of this country. It did not give the members of the house ample opportunity to discuss the government's proposals, and it did not give an adequate opportunity to the farmers, both tenant farmers and those who own their lands, to arrange just exactly how they would operate in the coming season. I know as a matter of fact that many farmers who own their land and many who rent were greatly embarrassed by the fact that the government's policy was not announced a long time before. They had contracts and leases to enter into, but they were not able to take any steps until they knew what the regulations would be.

During the last few weeks we have been given an analysis by various members of the house of just what the government's wheat policy will mean to the western farmer, and they all came to the conclusion that unquestionably the income of the wheat farmer will be cut drastically this year as compared with his returns from the 1940 crop. As I have stated to the house before, I am not a farmer, although I come from the heart of the wheat-growing country, and I would not presume to debate technical questions of farming with experts in these matters such as the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Perley), the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Ross), the hon. member for Portage la Prairie (Mr.

Leader), the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. Wright) and others. But all of us in western Canada are familiar with the wheat economy to a considerable extent because, speaking both figuratively and literally, it is our bread, and naturally we understand figures which affect our livelihood.

I believe that the Minister of Agriculture, in making the comparison he did the other day in this house, did not make it as clear as he might have done as to just what sacrifice the wheat farmers will be making under the policy. He was comparing the income of the wheat farmer from the 1940 crop with his income from the 1941 crop in order to show how much less the farmer would receive in 1941. I am not suggesting that the minister was intentionally unfair in his comparison because he was endeavouring to show what a great sacrifice the western farmer, the wheat farmer in particular, would be making under this policy. He told us that the maximum of wheat that could be sold by the farmers this year would be 230,000,000 bushels, and that the farmer would obtain approximately 50 cents a bushel, so that the maximum amount the farmers would obtain from the sale of their wheat from the 1941 crop would be \$115,000,000. To that he added the compensation provided under the bonus scheme, a maximum of \$36,000,000, and thus arrived at the total figure of \$151,000,000 as the amount the farmers would receive from the sale of their wheat and from the bonus proposals.

It would seem to me that in order to make a fair and proper comparison he should have taken the same basis in determining the income from the 1940 crop. The Minister of Trade and Commerce stated in this house on March 12 that by the end of the present crop year, July 31, the farmers would have sold 472,000,000 bushels of wheat, which at 50 cents a bushel—taking the same basis—would amount to \$236,000,000. That shows a cut in income of \$85,000,000 in the 1941 crop year as compared with 1940. That, according to my calculation, is the sacrifice which the wheat farmer is being asked to make. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture did not mean to confuse the house, but certainly he confused me. The minister admitted the tremendous sacrifices which the farmer will be asked to make as a result of this policy when he said in the house on Friday last:

The farmers of western Canada know that this policy is not putting money into their pockets, whether the money comes from the treasury of Canada or from any other source. They know that this policy is taking money out of their pockets and making it possible for this dominion to finance the war to the extent of at least \$100,000,000 more than would be