

which they promised to continue in the post-war period to prevent unnecessary inflation. I continue to quote from the Prime Minister:

The government has acted as promptly as was feasible in removing controls. It has sought, however, to avoid the obvious dangers of hasty and ill-considered removal of regulations still urgently needed. The process of adjustment will continue until all emergency controls are dispensed with.

Later on he said:

Nevertheless we still face conditions of possible inflation which, if not controlled, would unquestionably lead to startling increases in costs and prices, and in the general cost of living.

Then later:

The disaster of soaring prices and living costs must be prevented not only because of the injustices and suffering that would result therefrom but because it would arrest progress toward a healthy peacetime economy. Inflation would lay the basis for a severe depression.

I am quite sure today that the ramifications of the decontrol policy of the government has done just that. It has set the basis for a depression in this country and, affected by the psychological fear which is apparent across the country, the people are afraid of what the future holds for them. That danger is still here and this government should take immediate action to do something about it.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): What would you fellows have to talk about if you didn't have inflation and depression?

Mr. IRVINE: You.

Mr. McCULLOUGH (Assiniboia): To quote further from the Prime Minister's statement:

Nothing would restrict a lasting increase in production and employment more than a sharp rise in prices which would cut demand down to the present restricted level of supply.

Therefore the Prime Minister himself has seen the danger that would result from the decontrol policy if it were brought about before we had adequate supplies to meet the pent-up demand in the country. At the end of the statement, speaking about the decontrol policy, he says that its purpose is to protect the value of wages and wartime savings. I say that had this government gone out and stolen money from the pockets of the people, of the veterans who had saved a few dollars for rehabilitation, or if they had appropriated it and put it into the hands of big business interests, they could not have done it more effectively than they did by allowing the speculative element to enter into the situation as we see it today.

Before the dinner recess the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Hartt), speaking on this resolu-

[Mr. McCullough (Assiniboia).]

tion, asked whether we of this group would favour farmers' prices being under control. I understand he is an urban dweller and therefore he may not appreciate the fact that farmers' prices are under control. Almost every farm commodity is under control. However, I speak as a western farmer; I speak for those in my own constituency and for other farmers of the west who see the picture as I see it, and I say that I do not think the western farmer should be asked to be the anchor of our Canadian economy, at his expense. And that is what we saw during the war.

The western farmer is a pretty easy-going fellow. He does not want anything excessive, but he wants a fair price. The farmers of the west want the people of Canada to have food at decent prices, and we want it for all the people of the world. We have not asked for decontrol and high prices but for parity prices. We feel we have a right to our fair share of the national income.

We have never asked for the decontrol of our coarse grains and wheat in the west. For the last twenty-five years every bona fide farm organization in the west has asked for a stability price and long-term agreements whereby we would have consistent stability for farm products. I have always wondered, since coming here, why the government saw fit to leave ajar the door of the Winnipeg grain exchange and allow rye futures. When the coarse grains were thrown on the market, with the debacle that followed, we had the answer. Not a single letter has come to my desk asking for the opening of the Winnipeg grain exchange. It is high time, instead of having a committee such as is proposed, we close the Winnipeg grain exchange and that gambling house for ever, because if there is anything that is a black spot on Canadian democracy it is the grain exchange and that den of robbers who have been speculating on the farmers' grain and produce for so many years.

I remember not long ago the leader of the opposition, in reply to the leader of the C.C.F., said that he and his party were in favour of the open market as well as the wheat board for the marketing of the farmers' wheat. During the two years when the farmer was able to sell his wheat on the open market, as well as the grain board, the average in the year 1938-39 was as low as 50.38 cents at Winnipeg and 51½ cents in the year 1939-40.

This is my view. If we are to have stability in agriculture; if we are to ask western agriculture to be the anchor of our economy, the first thing we must do is to give the farmer a just and fair price for his produce. In other