

*The Budget—Mr. Argue*

for nations with exportable surpluses to cooperate in establishing an international food pool, and from that food pool distribute the surplus food to needy nations. The Canadian government record on this issue at the United Nations is very dismal. The government has failed to support—as a matter of fact, has criticized and opposed—attempts to establish such an international food pool.

Clause 6. As a method to get rid of at least part of any surplus agricultural products which might arise, such as a surplus of butter, I suggest that Canadian food consumption should be increased by a free school lunch program and free food for institutions. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, in a very excellent brief presented to the cabinet this year, strongly supported the idea of a free school lunch program in Canada, and pointed out that Canadian children do not drink sufficient milk. Nutrition standards for Canadian children would be improved by a free school lunch program.

Clause 7 would be the provision of surplus food to underdeveloped countries without charge or in exchange for local currency, for famine prevention and for a free school lunch program. I suggest that in such a program democracy has a powerful weapon to meet the threat of communism in many backward nations. I believe that as a democratic nation we should adopt a generous program of making food available to underdeveloped countries in order to prevent widespread famine, and also as part of a school lunch program that will of itself assist in improving educational standards.

Clause 8. Increased payments under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, and extension of the act, which provides a measure of income protection in time of crop failure, to all provinces of Canada, and the provision of a crop insurance scheme in areas where such a scheme could be suitably provided. I suggest that such an area might be a fruit-growing area, a tobacco-growing area, or some other area where concentration is largely on a single commodity or a single group of commodities.

Clause 9. Extension of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act to all parts of Canada, making it a comprehensive program of soil and water conservation. The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) almost every year now for a number of years has moved a motion asking for a soil and water conservation program for all Canada. I suggest that by a wide extension of the area of application of the benefits of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, this very laudable objective might be achieved.

[Mr. Argue.]

Clause 10 in the suggested farmers' bill of rights would be accelerated agricultural research. The benefits that could be derived from that are obvious. As one example only, I mention the benefits that will be derived this year from the use of the new rust-resistant variety of Selkirk wheat.

Clause 11. Assistance to the co-operative movement. This government at best takes a neutral attitude toward co-operatives, or in fact hinders the growth of co-operatives through taxation. We in the C.C.F. believe the government should take an active part in the promotion and the extension of co-operatives.

Clause 12. Low-cost credit should be provided for farm and home improvements. I suggest the interest rate charged under the present Farm Improvement Loans Act is too high and should be reduced.

Clause 13. Restoration of the farmer's right to deliver grain to the elevator of his choice; in other words, a fair and equitable distribution of box cars based on the farmer's choice.

Clause 14. Voluntary revocable check-off of farm union dues. We of the C.C.F. think it is a reasonable request; we think the government should grant it as a method of supporting our important farm organizations. I might point out that the labour unions have such a check-off, and what the check-off has done to benefit the labour unions I am sure it would do to benefit the farm unions.

Clause 15. Restoration of freight assistance on feed grain. We do not like the government's gradual removal of freight assistance on feed grain. We should like to see it restored immediately.

Clause 16. Continuation of the Crowsnest pass rates on grain. The Crowsnest pass rates are of extreme importance to western agriculture. The C.C.F. stands unalterably opposed to any tampering with the Crowsnest pass rates.

Clause 17. The immediate construction of the South Saskatchewan dam. The attitude of the Prime Minister toward the South Saskatchewan dam is almost incomprehensible. It took months of negotiation by the premier of Saskatchewan to get so much as a meeting with the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister's answer continues to be no. I think this answer of "no" means discrimination by this government against the prairie farmers and western agriculture.

Clause 18 of the bill of rights would be the marketing of all grain through the Canadian wheat board. We should like to see the Canadian Wheat Board Act extended so that all grain, including flax and rye, shall be marketed through the Canadian wheat board.