

Supply—Agriculture

I shall deal with the maritime provinces by themselves. In the first year we have here they start out with income of \$35 million, and they finish up with income of \$120 million. There is a gradual rise every year, beginning with 1936. There is not a single decrease until you get to 1948, and then it is \$105 million. In 1949 it is \$100 million. It goes up again in 1950 to \$108 million. As one goes along—

Mr. Brooks: May I ask a question? Can the minister tell us the difference between the purchasing power of a dollar in 1935 and 1950?

Mr. Gardiner: I am sure you will do that; I do not need to.

Mr. Brooks: It makes quite a difference, anyway.

Mr. Gardiner: There is a gradual increase in farm income from 1936 until you get to 1952.

Mr. Nicholson: Gross or net?

Mr. Gardiner: It is gross. The net is here, too.

In 1951 it took quite a jump in the maritimes. It went up to \$121 million; and in 1952 it went up a little higher, to \$126 million; and then it dropped down again to \$110 million, just \$2 million higher than it was in the peak year before, 1951. In the next year it went up to \$115 million; and the following year to \$120 million. What are the facts in relation to that? The facts are that in the only two years in which it is out of line at all with the gradual increase are the two years when it went up higher. How is that going to hurt the farmer? What were those two years? Those two years were the years of the Korean war, and anyone could give the reasons why there was a higher income then. But whenever my friends make a comparison they take 1951, which, in any place but the maritimes, was the highest year of all. They take that year and then they calculate what it was last year, and they say it is down 23 per cent. Well, to say the least, that is not very helpful reasoning. I was almost going to say it is dishonest reasoning. I am inclined to think that that term could be applied, but if I applied it to any particular individual I suppose I would have to withdraw it.

But what about Ontario and Quebec? I have lumped them together. They start out at \$258 million and they gradually go up every year from \$258 million until 1950 when they reach \$1,039 million, and there has not been a slump any time all the way up, and this government has been in power all

the time, and not even the Duplessis government has been in power through all the time during that period.

In 1951 the income jumped by almost \$200 million in those two provinces; it reached \$1,224 million.

In 1952 it dropped down to \$1,154 million and then the next year it started in at \$1,112 million. The next year it was \$1,113 million and the next year \$1,133 million. There has not been any lapse in the advance at all except for the two years of the Korean war when it went up higher.

And so, as the wheat pool says in Regina, there has not been any going down of farm income on farms in general across Canada; the farm income has been higher year by year.

Now, coming to the prairie provinces, we started out at \$272 million and I might call your attention to the fact that by 1944 we had got up to \$1,058 million, all of which indicates that we had a very good crop in the years 1942 and 1943. We sold a lot of wheat and we had a much higher cash income that year than during any of the years up to then. It was \$272 million in the first year and it gradually rose to \$694 million in 1943 and then jumped to \$1,058 million in 1944. That did not hurt us out west. We all recall that we have been boasting about the 1942-43 crop ever since, basing the enormous crop we did get on the fact that in 1941 we paid farmers to take their land out of crop and put it into summer fallow. In other words, we stored the grain not in elevators but in moisture in the land. The next years we produced wheat and did not have to pay any storage on it because the wheat was there. I should not say we did not pay any storage because we carried it until pretty near the end of the war but in that year we were producing a much bigger crop because we stored moisture in the ground to produce wheat and feed. We exported grain through hogs.

In 1945 we went back somewhat, to \$851 million. We went down about \$150 million and took a fresh start after those crops and we gradually went up again until we got to \$1,264 million in 1949; that is a cash income.

You will remember that the 1949 crop was one of the poorest crops we ever had. Statistics show it was just as poor as some of the poorest crops we had in the drought period. The only reason we have not heard anything about it in this house is because wheat was so high in price at that time that it did not have the same effect on farmers that it had in the thirties. Nevertheless the crop was poor and this is shown in these figures.

[Mr. Gardiner.]