

*Supply—Agriculture*

remember one time when the milk producers of the Fraser valley of British Columbia were in difficulty, and the international woodworkers of America went so far as to spend roughly \$1,000 of their own union funds to organize mass meetings in the Fraser valley, which were designed to help the milk producers of that area. They organized them most effectively. We had mass meetings of up to 1,000 milk producers. The end result was that orderly marketing was restored in the lower mainland of British Columbia. This was a contribution that organized labour made to agriculture in our province.

Organized labour contends that Canadians engaged in agriculture are entitled to the same rights and blessings as are all other Canadians. We would like to see agriculture organized to the point where it is not merely an organization that is kowtowing to a particular government in office. We would like to see organized agriculture speak its own mind and express its own needs regardless of the consequences. A number of years ago organized agriculture was most vehement in its desire for parity prices. I regret very much that many major sections of organized agriculture have changed in this respect and are now kowtowing to the government of the day asking for little bits and pieces, a little more of this and a little more of that. A few branches of organized agriculture have forgotten the basic rallying call of parity, not charity.

When I look at agriculture on the national scene I cannot help but remind the committee of my observation of agriculture in the Atlantic provinces. The capital needs of agriculture are simply fantastic and completely staggering. A billion dollars and more will be needed by way of capital investment to put Canadian agriculture on its feet. I would say—and I do not think any member from the maritime provinces would refute my contention—that about 80 per cent of the so-called farms in that region of Canada are not really farms at all; they are only farms as a last resort. When we look at the statistics of the income of agriculture in the Atlantic provinces we have to realize that there is an urgent need for major reform. A farm which consists of 18 acres and has three cows, 80 laying hens and four pigs is no longer good enough. Remedial action is urgent and necessary in order to build up economic units of agricultural production.

Hundreds of millions of dollars of capital investment are urgently needed, and I am afraid that existing legislation is most inadequate in this regard. It is equally important that agriculture not only be given parity but that measures be undertaken in order to enable farmers to produce at an economic

level. There is room in our nation for the farmer who can operate at an efficient cost of production. However, we have a long way to go before farmers in Canada generally will be producing at minimum cost, and I believe it is one of our major national responsibilities to help to bring this about.

I know that the minister represents a Saskatchewan riding, and I realize that in the main wheat growers are producing at cost. They are very highly organized. However, I do not think members of the House of Commons have ever realized that there are more farmers in Canada who have never produced a bushel of wheat than there are wheat producers. The minister comes from Saskatchewan but I hope he will keep in mind that there are many more farmers in Canada who do not produce a bushel of wheat than there are wheat farmers. There are farmers engaged in all kinds of agriculture in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. These people are not overly interested in the welfare of the wheat farmer.

I know that because of the history of our party our group has usually been the spokesman for the wheat farmers of the prairies. I know that the minister's predecessors have also come from the prairies. I should like to see the day when the Department of Agriculture will pay some attention to those farmers who do not grow wheat, because there are many more of them in almost every province than those who grow wheat. It is in the interests of all of us that farmers in general receive an equitable share of the national income. I regret that almost everything the present and preceding governments have done has been solely in the interests of the wheat farmers of Canada.

I believe the minister has the intelligence to realize the over-all position of Canadian agriculture. I can remember the Saskatchewan election of 1938. At that time I happened to meet him on the sidewalk outside the *Star-Phoenix* office and we were watching the election results as they were posted on the signs. The minister and I were both born and raised in Saskatchewan, and I know he has the intelligence to look beyond Saskatchewan, to consider the needs of agriculture in other parts of Canada and to realize that the wheat farmers are not the only farmers in Canada. They represent only one branch of farmers. My great-grandfather, my grandfather and my father were wheat farmers in Saskatchewan, and I admire the wheat farmers. They have come a long way and they have had to sacrifice much. They now have orderly marketing of their product. By reason of their very strength of organization they are able to obtain a certain degree of equity.