

## Supply—Agriculture

Our concern as western members, and I think I can speak for all western members of this party, is with the situation of the grain farmer. That is the immediate problem. The problem of the grain farmer is that he purchases everything that he needs on a protected market while all the grain he sells is sold on a competitive market. This results in what is known as the cost price squeeze or high cost of production. Before there is a division between eastern and western farmers I would suggest that the problem of the high cost of production applies to the eastern farmers as well as the western farmers. As farmers let us not be divided on that point. As has happened in the past, let us not have eastern farmers fighting western farmers. Let us not have any member of the house, as we heard this afternoon, try to divide the farmers.

In the past members representing several different parties have been sent to the House of Commons and after what I heard this afternoon I can understand why those representing eastern ridings could not understand the western problem. The western members who were sent here could not even agree among themselves. They did not put forward the problem of the western farmer. They were fighting party politics.

For the benefit of eastern members I wish to point out one thing that has bothered the grain farmers of the west for many years. At the present time the people of Canada are buying wheat 15 to 20 cents a bushel cheaper than it can be purchased anywhere else. Let us suppose all Canadian farmers stopped producing wheat and the Canadian people had to buy wheat for home consumption from some other source. They would pay at least 15 to 20 cents a bushel more than they are paying today. Instead of the income of the western or other grain farmer going up, it has been gradually going down. Today the Canadian people are buying wheat cheaper than any person on the North American continent can buy it. This is not a fair situation in an economy that is rising.

For purposes of clarification I suggest that we divide our economy into three parts. We will call the first group labour, the second group management and the third group the consumers. The reason I call the third group consumers is that our western farmers come within that term. I think what applies to all western farmers applies to all consumers. I include eastern farmers in that group.

Now, which one of these three groups receives the most out of our economy today? All the members are supplied with the literature from the labour organizations. We receive the labour magazines, and I think

the labour people will admit that within the last 10 years they have increased their net income, over and above the increased cost of living, by 27 per cent. Management, on the other hand, can always look after itself. Whatever it costs management to produce an article, their percentage of profit can always be added to that cost of production and passed along to the consumer.

I would suggest that the consumer group is the only group that has not been protected by legislation. I would suggest that at this session or very soon the government should intervene on behalf of the consumer group. I would suggest also that so far as the farmers who are included in that consumer group are concerned, the minister might give serious consideration to the question of the two price system. I do not think any western member will maintain that the two price system will solve all the problems of western Canada. However, I think we will say that such a system would put western farmers on a firm basis and they would not have to come to the government year after year for assistance.

This two price system has been ignored by certain large farm groups in the west, to which reference was made this afternoon on several occasions. I should like to read a part of an article that was published in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* on April 8, 1959. It was an article about the dean of agriculture in the University of Saskatchewan, Professor Rupert Ramsay. In this article it is stated that Professor Ramsay said the net farm income in Saskatchewan last year was \$2,000 per farm. Professor Ramsay said that the prairie farmer had established a case for some kind of additional income. Canadian farmers had difficulty selling in the British market because agricultural prices in the United Kingdom were much lower than in Canada. The only alternative to this problem was to establish a two price system with one price for the domestic market and one for international markets.

Efforts have been made by one member from western Canada, Mr. Chairman, to belittle what other western members have done, particularly in connection with the farmers' march on Ottawa. I want to inform this house that any misunderstanding that has arisen between the marchers and the members from the west has not been in regard to the problems of western Canada. I think we will all agree that there is a serious problem there. Any misunderstanding that arose was in connection with the solution of that problem. They say deficiency payments are the solution, and most of us contend that the two price system would be. The reason we have