

grandmothers and the school children out in the field. It is doubtful whether next year we shall have that supply of extra labour from eastern Canada, and therefore we have an extra problem in that regard.

What is really happening in those western provinces to-day? During the last few months, and in fact at the present time, valuable breeding stock has been or is being slaughtered, chiefly because of the lack of help but also because of the need of ready cash. Many of these farmers have wheat in their bins, but they have no cash, and therefore they are unable to meet their operational and living expenses. Therefore they have to forfeit some young heifers or other young stock in order to find the cash they need in order to carry on. There are people on many farms who would like to buy an extra milch cow which their neighbour has to sell, but they also lack the cash with which to do so. This year, in Saskatchewan particularly, we are asked for an increase of seventy per cent over last year's hog production, a tremendous increase. The fact is that we must realize that last year we lacked the proper accommodation on our farms for the increased number of hogs we then had. There was disease because in many instances our farmers lacked the cash with which to buy the necessary vaccines. I believe one of the field representatives of the provincial government stated that last year we lost forty per cent of the young hogs in Saskatchewan through disease, and that loss could have been prevented. Then we find that machinery in the west is breaking down, following the years of drought, depression and low prices. The machinery problem was acute even before war commenced; farmers were not able to keep their machines in repair or to buy new machines. To-day we find that there is a shortage of blacksmithing and blacksmithing repairs. High prices and the present regulations governing new machinery sales are penalizing some of our smaller farmers. Then, of course, cash orders are usually honoured first, so that the man who can pay only by instalments is penalized in this manner also.

I should like to mention one matter in particular with regard to industry in western Canada which I think is pertinent to the question of agriculture. I refer to the matter of distilleries. Before too long I should like to hear from the responsible ministers why we have not as yet any distilleries built and functioning in the western provinces. They are going ahead with distilleries in the United States; on the prairies of the western states huge plants are being constructed. I am informed that this government already has under construction at Sarnia a large plant for

[Mrs. Nielsen.]

the manufacture of synthetic alcohol, and I am further told that this plant is to use oil as the base. This oil will have to be brought from Colombia or some other place in South America by tanker. I understand further that a plant using oil for the manufacture of synthetic alcohol takes about eighteen months to build and equip. That is twice as long as it takes to build and equip a plant for the manufacture of synthetic alcohol from grain. I am also given to understand that the cost of building and equipping one of these plants such as we have at Sarnia is twice that of building a distillery. What I should like to know is this. Why was this huge plant built at Sarnia instead of distilleries being built in the western provinces? Who is going to have this plant at Sarnia after the war is over? Is it going to revert to some of the great oil interests of this country, so that in addition to having a monopoly on oil they will also have a monopoly on synthetic alcohol and the manufacture of synthetic rubber? I am told that the mash which is left after the distillery has extracted the alcohol lacks a certain amount of starch but is very rich in vitamins and therefore makes a better feed for cattle and live stock than the original grain. Consequently, even from that point of view it would have been more advisable for the sake of the war effort and for the sake of speed and efficiency to build distilleries in the west instead of building this huge plant at Sarnia. As far as I can see, the use of alcohol in post-war years is going to be very important. In connection with the manufacture of plastics, particularly, alcohol is an essential ingredient. If some of these giant distilleries had been erected in western Canada we would have had a basis for the manufacture of plastics. We in the west have lacked industries in the past, and here was a base upon which we could have built something for the future. Apparently, however, we are not to have it. It appears to be nothing more or less than that once again the people of western Canada have been sold down the river, that private interests have once more had the ear of this government instead of considering the needs of our western people, both now and in the years following the war.

Then I cannot understand why, when various farm bodies in this country have brought forward proposals with regard to increasing production, those proposals apparently should be disregarded by the government. What is the good of farmers having elected, representative bodies to bring forward proposals if governments do not pay any attention to them? We have had proposals advanced by the federation of agriculture, by the wheat