

The farming industry has more than its share of those who must live on a substandard level. I have here a table compiled from figures issued by the dominion bureau of statistics. These figures show that, according to the 1941 census, farm operators comprised seventeen per cent of the country's workers; yet in that year they received only 9.6 per cent of the national income. Here are the percentages for several other years:

Year	Per cent
1938	10.7
1939	11.6
1940	10.4
1941	9.6
1942	13.2
1943	11.0
1944	12.8
1945 (Preliminary estimate)	11.0

That is not all. I have here a copy of sessional paper No. 228, dated April 14, 1947, being a return to a motion of the hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Fair). It discloses this information, showing the number of farmers who filed income tax papers in the years listed and the number of those who were not assessable:

Year	Number filing income tax returns	Number not assessable
1939-40	8,927	7,572
1940-41	18,918	16,783
1941-42	29,281	22,506
1942-43	29,741	22,227
1943-44	68,791	48,544
1944-45	104,588	75,459
1945-46	136,039	82,731

I may say, too, that this return shows the amount of money collected from farmers for income tax in various provinces. This is interesting. The following amounts were paid by farmers in the fiscal year 1945-46.

Ontario	\$1,086,179
Manitoba	1,866,590
Saskatchewan	2,587,632
Alberta	1,114,000

All the other provinces put together paid in from the farmers in income tax sums amounting to only chicken-feed, including the province of British Columbia.

Mr. REID: Have you British Columbia?

Mr. BURTON: The British Columbia farmers paid \$317,025 in that year. All the other provinces including British Columbia contributed very little compared with the amount paid by these provinces in the way of income tax, which goes to show that those provinces in the farming industry are not so hot as some people would lead us to believe they are. I have not the time to go into all the figures contained in this return, but I can assure the house that it is interesting. Furthermore, I have here a return which was

[Mr. Burton.]

tabled, sessional paper No. 228 D, moved for by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar, and dated May 1. The figures in that return are brought up to date on percentages and so on. Of the 652,928 farm operators as per the 1941 census, 20.8 per cent filed income tax papers for 1945-46; and, mark you this, only 8.2 per cent of those were assessable, while 12.6 per cent were not assessable. While some of the remaining 80 per cent, or very near that percentage, that did not file returns may be taxable, yet with the severe penalties attached for failure to do so, it is safe to assume that the majority of those whose net income were above the exemption figures have filed their returns.

I contend that the information contained in those two returns once again proves that the farmers of this country have not received their fair share of the national income. It must also be borne in mind that many of the farmers who have been assessed are treated in an unfair manner, because in most cases the small net income on which the farmer must pay a tax is the combined income of two, three or sometimes more members of the family. There are also quite a number of other cases where the income tax regulations place an undue handicap on the farmers. I may say that in this morning's mail I received from one of my constituents a letter, part of which I should like to read for the benefit of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) as well as the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. McCann). Again this is only an example, one of hundreds if not thousands of similar cases throughout the country. Here is what this man had to say:

We hauled water winter and summer for twenty years, round trip of four and a half miles for all the stock until 1944 when we drilled a well that in all cost us approximately \$900. We were on the point of selling this farm for what we could get for it, and move elsewhere; now my son is willing to carry on right here. I know of two near neighbours contemplating drilling wells this summer, but because of no income tax deduction on it are hesitating; they think they would rather reduce their stock and buy some power equipment instead, which I think is a mistake. I think a drilled well should have a ten-year scale of deduction.

With that and with many other things along that line I most heartily agree. But again time presses and I need not bring more cases to the attention of the ministers. Surely if they look for them, they can find them.

I wish to bring to the attention of hon. members what Mr. W. A. Drummond, a Canadian agricultural economist, had to say, namely:

Canadian agricultural history shows that with few exceptions it has not been possible to secure