

*Supply—Agriculture*

income tax, and we want to bring the Newfoundland fishermen up to the point where they can pay income tax.

In order that these happy results may be achieved without detriment to the farmer, I am rising today to issue a word of warning to my friends from Saskatchewan. I want to suggest to them that they warn their farmer constituents against expanding the production of wheat, because a method has now been found whereby bread can be made from fish protein. Everybody knows that protein is far more essential to health than starch.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I want to say this party has stood firm for a national agricultural policy comprehensive enough to embrace all phases of agriculture in Canada. We are simply not satisfied with the hit or miss, hodgepodge policy of this government.

I was most astounded this morning when the Minister of Agriculture, in introducing his estimates in this house, failed to mention two of the very important phases of agriculture, namely livestock and hogs, eggs and poultry. In spite of the fact, that the committee gave unanimous consent to allow him to continue his introductory remarks, he did not see fit to deal with these topics. Perhaps he had some reason for it; I do not know. But I want to say that until we do have a comprehensive system of parity prices and other formulas by which the Canadian agriculturist is assured a fair price, I feel we have not a suitable agricultural policy for Canada.

Now that some segments of our Canadian agricultural economy are really in a price squeeze, I think it is important that this house give careful scrutiny to certain aspects of the agriculture situation. Once again this morning the Minister of Agriculture took exception to some remarks I made in a former debate, when I indicated that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture had criticized him with respect to his statement concerning the welfare of the agriculturist in Canada. I want to deal with that matter before proceeding with my remarks concerning policies in general. The article to which I referred in a former debate was carried in the *Western Producer* of February 2, 1956, and was entitled, "Making Monkeys out of us; Delegate Criticizes Gardiner".

At the Hamilton meeting of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture a delegate got up and took exception to remarks the minister had made at a previous meeting in Winnipeg in respect to the income of farmers in Canada. This delegate asked that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture pass a resolution, and took exception to what he claimed

[Mr. Carter.]

was a misrepresentation by the minister. I want to read from the article. Incidentally, this delegate told Dr. Hannam, C.F.A. president, that he was evading the question which he had put to him earlier in the session and asked that he make a direct answer. The article says:

Dr. Hannam said he had answered it the first time when he referred Mr. Stauffer to his presidential address in which he said that while most Canadians were enjoying prosperity, the farmers were not sharing in it and this should be recognized in the national picture when 1956 programs were being made.

Then the Canadian Federation of Agriculture passed a resolution criticizing the statement of the minister, and this is what it says:

The 20th annual meeting of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, in session today, noted with regret a press dispatch reporting a speech made by Mr. Gardiner, federal Minister of Agriculture, at Winnipeg. He is reported to have said that farmers' cash income for the past five years has been "the highest by far we have ever had".

His comparison of cash and net farm income in Canada for the two most recent five-year periods, while technically correct, tends to leave an entirely erroneous impression with the public. During the past five years the annual cash farm income of Canadian farmers has declined by \$480 million and net farm income by \$700 million. This situation reflects not only the sharp decline in farm prices, which has been experienced by Canadian farmers, but also some increase in farm costs during the five-year period.

The farm price situation is most simply reflected by the ratio of prices received by, to prices paid to farmers during the period. This ratio has dropped from an average of 110 in 1951, to 80 at present, and is now at the lowest level since 1940.

**Mr. Gardiner:** There is only one thing involved in what I said this morning. I pointed out that my hon. friend had said I had not discussed net income, and that report indicates I did.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** I will accept what the minister states, if he wants to say he discussed net income. Even so, he knows quite well he is leaving a false impression with the general public when he makes the statement, taking a five year period—

**Mr. Gardiner:** I did not do any such thing. My hon. friend said yesterday I never at any time, and especially at Hamilton, discussed net income. Is he going to be honest enough to say he was wrong?

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** When the minister had the opportunity to take the floor, by the unanimous consent of this committee, he refused to make a further statement. Now in my 30 minutes I want to deal with this, and he can reply at a later date.

The Winnipeg *Free Press* of January 28 referred to the statement the minister made at Winnipeg. I am going to quote the article