

food and breeding stock for the countries of Europe will necessitate the increasing of our supplies many, many times.

What we have to do is to consider right here and now the problem of laying a correct basis for what we believe, and, in my opinion, properly believe, will be the necessity for increased food production over a period of many years. After all, we have a stupendous task. Last year we were fortunate in that we had the cooperation, shall I say, of nature. We had a year of bountiful rainfall, a year in which the production of crops was outstanding. But what basis have we for believing that the coming season will be as generous to us? Therefore we have to see to it now, in the early part of the year, that every possible piece of machinery, every single acre of land, and every animal are used and are ready for increased production during the coming season.

During the weeks and months I spent in Saskatchewan and Alberta, in very close contact with the farming people, I came to the conclusion that it was absolutely impossible for one to feel the degree of optimism which has been expressed by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). The Minister of Agriculture himself, speaking recently in Saskatchewan, stated, as reported in the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* of January 16, 1943:

There are sufficient reserves of man-power on Saskatchewan farms to make possible the increased production of hogs, cattle, butter and eggs which the government is seeking in this province this year.

I do not know of any people; I do not know of any section of the Canadian people who are working longer hours than are the farmers in western Canada. I do not know of any people who are striving more than they are to reach the production goals which have been set before them; and yet, after this close contact with the people, I fail to see how, under existing conditions, they are going to be able to reach those goals.

It is all very well for the Minister of Agriculture to be optimistic, but I must tell the members of this house that our farming people to-day are feeling a sense of frustration on account of their inability to reach those production goals for lack of that assistance which they need. To say that they are dissatisfied is to put it very mildly. In fact, I doubt very much if I could possibly express in parliamentary language the deep disgust of the farmers. I remember, as everyone does, the marvellous and stirring effect of the words of Mr. Churchill when he said, "Give us the tools and we will finish the job." The farmers of western Canada to-day are saying the same

thing to the government of Canada, "Give us the tools and we will finish the job." At present, however, they are lacking the various things they need to give them an opportunity to step up production, and for that reason they consider that this one job of the great war service which they could render has fallen far short of what they would like it to be.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mrs. NIELSEN: To continue, Mr. Speaker, I find myself in disagreement with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) again, upon the question of which type of farm we can look to for our increases in production. In one of his speeches I believe he drew an imaginary line across Saskatchewan and said that to the south of that line, where there are many of the larger farms, he expected to see large increases, particularly in live stock. I am willing to admit that these days in the provinces of the west there are many farms which still are not producing the maximum of which the land is capable, but this is so for various reasons. I think the Minister of Agriculture, in expecting increases in production on the larger farms, will find that lack of labour on those farms may, in some instances, bring about some curtailment of the production of live stock, instead of increases. It is on the smaller farms which stretch over the northern parts of the province that we have had great increases in the past and, I believe, can see further increases in the future.

The trouble, of course, is that the farmers are cautious. Owing to the fact that there is uncertainty in connection with prices, and no guarantee as to what the future may bring, many farmers hesitate to increase production even if they could do so, because in the past they have had some sad experiences. On many of the smaller farms we find that lack of ready cash with which to increase herds is preventing an increase in production. These farms lack the necessary machinery; they lack the foundation stock, and of course they also face a labour shortage. I do not think I have to remind hon. members that there has been a great exodus of people from the prairie provinces. That is an epic story, which perhaps some day will be written. The harvest of last year was brought in only because we were able to get workers from eastern Canada, and because we had the old grandfathers and