

Should the war continue into the summer of this year the food production in Europe cannot approach that of normal years. Looking at the situation in even its most favourable light there will be a demand for food that the world will find great difficulty in supplying. Canada is responding promptly to the call of the motherland for men and equipment. Britain needs more than men, she must have food,—food this year and food next year. We are sending of our surplus now. We should prepare for a larger surplus this year and next year. The government is strongly impressed with the desirability of increasing the crop acreage in Canada. The Canadian farmer, earnestly bending all his energies to increase the food supply for the Britisher at home and the British soldiers at the front, is doing his share in this gigantic struggle of the Empire.

I would urge the farmers to do their share in helping to assist the people of Great Britain, who for many years have borne the burden of a heavy tax for the maintenance of a great navy, in preventing them from suffering want or privation.

From the standpoint of whether it is proper agricultural policy to encourage men to put in grain on all land, irrespective of whether it has been summer-fallowed or not, I shall say nothing as I am not a farmer. The fact remains that the Dominion Government and the provincial Governments, during the six months since the commencement of this terrible war, have been urging the farmers throughout Canada, especially western farmers, to increase their production. With what result? The Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg, Mr. Bruce Walker, whose letter I have referred to, has said that in western Canada there will be 40 per cent more land ready for crops this spring than in any other year in the history of western Canada. I think his figures are exaggerated. My information is that there will be 10 per cent or 12 per cent more land ready for cultivation when the spring ploughing is done for 1915 than was under crop in any other year in Canada. That is in Saskatchewan. Providence last fall favoured the farmers of western Canada with climatic conditions conducive to getting land ready for crops. Any person who had any available land has it ready for the spring of 1915. The work has been done by the farmers of western Canada, they have not credit with the banks to borrow money to buy seed, they are looking to the Government to supply seed, and, without raising any question of party politics, as I have no desire to do anything of that kind, I earnestly entreat the Dominion Government to take this question up and to act on it at once. Seeding time will be on us in six weeks or two months. It may be a question

whether the Government can readily obtain seed in western Canada; but an effort should be made right away. We have been priding ourselves in Canada during the last ten years on being the greatest wheat-producing colony in the Empire. We pride ourselves on our great production of wheat and other grains and say that we are the greatest agricultural colony in the Empire. The farmers of western Canada and of all Canada have done the work; they have acted on the suggestion made by the Dominion and Provincial Agricultural Departments, they have made all the land they possibly could available for crops for the season of 1915. Now give them the seed they are entitled to, the seed you promised them in October and November; and give them an opportunity to show in 1915 that we are worthy of the title we have taken to ourselves during the last number of years, namely that of being the bread basket of the British Empire.

Hon. W. J. ROCHE (Minister of the Interior): Being a western man myself, I can sympathize with the farmers in the West, more especially in what is known as the drouth-stricken area in the southern portions of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. I sympathize with the hon. gentleman, who, as a representative of the province of Saskatchewan, in his efforts to secure, in so far as we can possibly concede the legitimate demands of these farmers, the seed grain which is necessary to seed down land which is already prepared for crops. The hon. gentleman has referred to the history of the seed grain question in years gone by. It is true that this Government has been in the habit of looking more especially after the homesteaders, inasmuch as we have regarded them in the light of wards, and we have been in the habit, to a limited extent, where they have had crop failures, of advancing seed grain to them, taking a lien against the homestead, which, of course, was good security, as we had the title to the land in our possession. In 1908 the question assumed much larger proportions, and, as a result of negotiations between the then Minister of the Interior and the provincial governments of the West, very much larger demands were made on the Dominion Government. At that time the provincial governments desired the Dominion to advance money, not only in the case of lands not patented, but also on lands that were patented. The then Minister of the Interior took the position, and quite properly so, that this Government