

The Address—Mr. Wright

million this year, but I do not think we should use dollars as the standard in measuring our progress. A fairer way would be to give the volume production of goods. So far as volume production of goods in Canada is concerned, we have today approximately the same volume of production that we had during 1944 and 1945. There is a greater dollar value but actually in volume production of goods there has been little increase. That was to be expected, because during 1944 and 1945 we were producing mostly standardized goods, war production. Even the goods which we were using in home consumption were standardized and naturally we were able to get a greater volume of production. Immediately the war was over, we as civilians demanded a more diversified production in this country, and naturally that production, because it was diversified, became less. The government are to be congratulated on the fact that they have brought the production back to where it was in 1944 and in 1945.

However, in spite of this increased production, if we read the financial papers, if we read the annual reports of the chartered banks, if we read the reports of the Canadian chamber of commerce, the manufacturers association, the Canadian federation of agriculture, and the labour organizations, we find a note of doubt as to the future. In giving their reports so far in this debate, the ministers have brought us up to the present, but they have not given any indication of what the future may hold in store for us. We find some of these organizations to which I have referred saying that we are going to have a recession. Others say that that recession may even become a depression. The surest way that they can make it into a depression is to keep on talking about it until they get everybody scared to death, and then they will have a depression. They have not been following a wise course in that respect.

Let me quote a statement which appeared in the *Monetary Times*—and I think it is fairly typical of the expressions which we find in our publications:

Businessmen are complaining that there was never a time in their memory when it was so difficult to form an intelligent estimate of the state of things to come. So manifold are the imponderables in the international situation, they contend, that about the only way to pick your way through the maze of the future is with a bent pin, like the Chinese do at the race track.

If big business in this country is in the state of mind where it is prepared to admit that it has no plans for the future, that it is just sitting there waiting for something to happen, it is time that we had a government in this country which is prepared to do a little

bit of planning for the future and to let the people know what these plans are.

Why do we find the situation that we have today? Why are manufacturers, the farmers and the labouring people in doubt? If you follow it up you will find that almost invariably the statement is that we have become a great trading nation, and that from 30 per cent to 35 per cent of everything we produce in this country goes into the world markets, and we do not know what these markets may do; we do not know whether the people to whom we are selling are going to be able to continue to buy from us.

Great Britain became a great trading nation in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century. She became a great trading nation because she was prepared both to sell and to buy. I say that that is the only way that we in Canada can ever become a great trading nation. We can become a great trading nation only when we are prepared to import as well as export.

In his speech the other day, the Minister of Agriculture spoke of England in the days of Gladstone when she was a great trading nation, but that was seventy years ago. Today the world is changed, and the position in Great Britain has been changed greatly, changed mostly by two world wars. In the first world war Britain had to dispose of some of her assets which she had throughout the world. In the second world war the situation was even worse. In the first two and a half years of the second world war Great Britain carried the load of the defence of democracy in the world, and she did it by disposing of every asset that she had all over the world to get the means of carrying on the war until the United States came in and we instituted lend-lease. What happened at the end of the war? Within three months of the end of the war we stopped lend-lease. The United States stopped it first, and we, like Charlie McCarthy, followed along—"me, too." Then what happened? It was only about three or four months later that we realized the foolishness of the move and that we were not going to be able to dispose of our products. So we made a loan to Great Britain. The United States made a loan of \$3,750 million, and our loan was \$1,250 million. Immediately that loan was made the United States removed controls, and almost overnight the loan lost about 40 per cent of its value, so far as the purchasing power of Great Britain was concerned. We followed suit, with the result that almost immediately the loan we had made became worth about 70 cents on the dollar.

[Mr. Wright.]