

And they came in at a very opportune moment for the Allies. They came in with \$7,000,000,000 to start with, an amount almost equal to the total gold supply of the whole world. I do not think it is fair to say in that Order in Council that we should necessarily encourage the production of wheat in the Canadian provinces for our new and mighty Ally, the United States. Our wheat is not vital to her life, I trust. If they want wheat they are willing to buy it and pay for it as a commercial transaction.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACLEAN: While the Government were considering the matter of amending the tariff under the War Measures Act, which was an objectionable method, I say they should have considered further amendments to the tariff. The Minister of Finance was sweating great drops of blood and undergoing terrible agony when he consented to the new reciprocity treaty to satisfy his friends of the western provinces, and he might as well have considered the abandonment of further items of tariff taxation, limited though it might be, to encourage agricultural production, which is needed now and in the next few years to come. Should the war fortunately end during the current year, as I trust it will, there would still exist a great necessity for increased productions in all the food-producing countries of the world for 1918, and the same will be true of 1919 and 1920. The world will be fortunate indeed if it escapes a famine, not only during the days of actual war, but after the days of peace come and the armies have been restored to their several countries. Any Government policy should be predicated not upon the demands of to-day or to-morrow, or of this year, but upon those of several years to come. Talking production is waste of time unless we encourage and assist as far as we can those who are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The removal of duties upon fertilizers, farm machinery and all the instruments of production would be of considerable advantage in these years to the men who are exhorted by Governments and by business men and by everybody to increase their productions. Even if you did it under the War Measures Act, it would be evidence of good intention at least. But we observe that there is nothing in the speech which has been delivered by the Minister of Finance to indicate that he has given any con-

sideration whatever to aid in this manner increased production.

In many other respects much might be done to encourage production. There might be a reduction in freight rates upon all the commodities which are instruments in production, such as farm machinery and fertilizers. It would not be a difficult matter for this country to arrange in one way or another, even if it were paid for out of the treasury, to have the freight rates reduced upon these commodities which are so essential in production. It would assist in the accomplishment of the end which we all desire. Then I think the Government might very well insist upon a preference in transportation for such things as seed, fertilizers, farm machinery, etc., in view of the existing congestion of traffic. If we desire to actually increase production it is only a fair suggestion that there should be some preference in transportation in view of the congestion and the many restrictions to-day placed upon transportation, in order that we might thus encourage the men whom we are continuously and persistently exhorting to increase production for the good of this country, for the welfare of humanity, and for the great cause which we have at heart. Further, would not a reduction, or an elimination entirely in many cases, of the duty on high-priced articles of necessity be of advantage to the Canadian consumer to-day? Would it not widen the field of competition and assist in the restoration of more healthy trade conditions and thus restrict the possibility of manipulation of prices and the withholding of products from the market? Every other protectionist country in the world has since the beginning of the war reduced or removed entirely the duties upon food products. This is the only country in the world, I think, which deliberately undertook to increase taxation upon the actual necessities of life, even food products, when the 7½ per cent was added to the general tariff in 1915. I think I may fairly be justified in expressing my surprise that nothing has been done by the Government in this direction. Apparently they have not taken into consideration at all the doing of anything to relieve the distress and anxiety of so many of our people in respect to the high cost of living. Nothing has been done. A commission was appointed some years ago to inquire into this matter, but, instead of being called a commission to inquire into the high cost of living, it might more properly be described as a commission to inquire as to what was the cost of the living of the dead. They have been engaged