

the elevator at the railway tracks and before the freight was paid was 66 cents, leaving 4 cents profit to the farmer. This figure is based on allowing the farmer a fair living wage but not interest on capital invested. That amounts practically to 6 per cent. so that 94 per cent goes out in other ways to other interests. The margin the farmer has to go on is very small in any event and wheat offers perhaps a higher one in general than any other product.

I will give you an example of apples shipped to Calgary and sold at \$1.10 a box. The charges that come back are: Commission to commission houses 20%—22c; brokerage charge 2½ cents a box whether the apples are sold or not and five cents a box if they are sold through them; freight 30 cents a box; overhead charges in the Okanagan—boxes, packing, paper, and delivery on the train, 40 cents a box; selling agency, 10 cents a box, making a total of \$1.04½ cents a box. That leaves for the grower 5½ cents a box; that is the margin they get with apples selling at \$1.10 a box to the wholesaler in Calgary. In some cases the conditions are very much worse.

When you realize that so much of the wealth that comes out of the ground is distributed among the other people and industries you can see that this question of increasing production is not brought forward solely in the interests of the farmer but of the whole community. For that reason we ask you all to join, in urging upon the government the passing of an Act similar to that in force in New Zealand. I see that we were assured by the Attorney General at a meeting in Grand Forks that it is proposed to introduce legislation along these lines. We have had a sort of semi-official assurance for some time to the same effect, but it is not out of place to have an expression of opinion from a body of trained men like you, men trained in the giving of credit.

If the statements I have made are true and I submit they are, and they meet with your approval, then I claim it is your duty to take some action which will bring pressure to bear upon the government. You realize how your business would suffer if you could not secure credit or if the credit you had was suddenly withdrawn. Well, today the farmer is in just that position.

It is all very well to increase the production but the next question is to secure some fair return for the crops that he has grown. We have transportation now, railways and waggon roads fairly good through a very large district and possibly far in advance of what the production is. But even then we are not getting a fair return for the produce. Co-operative companies have been formed but we find that they are working practically one against the other. There was a case the other day where one co-operative company was selling crab apples at a certain price, but another company under-bid them a certain amount per box, which amounted to \$1,100 on the three carloads.