

at right angles to the prevailing wind, which in our district is the west wind; and we put one strip in crop, leave the next strip, put the next strip in crop, leave the next one, and so on all down the field. In that way we have a field of, let us say, only twenty rods wide, to blow, and the drift therefore does not accumulate to the same extent as it would if there were a field a mile wide for the west wind to play havoc with. In this way we have practically prevented the soil drifting. In 1933 we planted four hundred acres in wheat on this farm and harvested four hundred bushels. It took half of the total receipts to pay the cost of combining the crop, and the other half is all that remains for the man on the farm to live on until next fall. Furthermore, there is no seed, and that has to be purchased in the spring.

This condition prevails in that part of the country. It prevails also in the southwestern part of the province to a greater degree, as mentioned by the honourable member from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae) this afternoon. I agree with him that the proper thing to do is to move the settlers there into the north, where there is a greater rainfall and they can make a good home for themselves on C.P.R. or Hudson Bay lands, or on homesteads which they can purchase from the Government at one dollar an acre.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Has not that transfer been in operation for some years past?

Hon. Mr. ASELTINE: Yes, it has been under way for two years. I do not know how many families have been moved from that particular district, but from urban centres and from any area where the rural municipal councils certify the land is not fit for wheat or any other kind of farming now being carried on, the Government is moving the people north, two-thirds of the cost being paid by it and one-third by the municipality. If the abandoned land is worth anything at all it is taken over by the Department of Natural Resources. Probably it would be easy to use the land again for grazing purposes, for sandy soil will grow grass in good years—something which cannot be done on heavy clay gumbo. I might add that even on the heavy soil of which I have been speaking you can always grow oats on summer-fallow land, but not enough for feed. One reason why we cannot successfully mix-farm on such land is that if we do not grow a crop of wheat the forage crop is also a failure. We might stock up with cattle, horses and hogs, and have no feed for them. In this event we should be obliged either to give them away or to ship them into the north,

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and then next year start all over again. I think the only way to circumvent this state of affairs is to build up a supply of feed in good years to carry us over the lean years. That is what is being done at the present time.

At this stage I should like to pay a tribute to the Minister of Agriculture for the Dominion, Hon. Mr. Weir, for the great work he has been doing on behalf of agriculture. He is not only a practical farmer and stock man, but a man of high educational attainments, and he is using his practical experience and his talents, working night and day, in the interests of the farmer. In the West we are all satisfied that he is doing a great work.

We are also satisfied that the Empire Trade Agreements have been quite satisfactory, for the reasons already mentioned in this debate.

The wheat pools are satisfied that the London Wheat Agreement is a good measure. We are not anticipating any difficulty at all in regard to the reduction of acreage. I will tell you why: the grasshopper menace is upon us. We had never been bothered with this pest before. The grasshoppers flew in last August and laid their eggs, infesting the greater part of the three Prairie Provinces from the international border to as far north as Township 33, perhaps a little farther. This takes in perhaps more than fifty per cent of the cultivated land of these provinces. All over that area, on roadsides and in stubble fields, the grasshoppers have deposited anywhere from fifteen to fifty eggs per square foot. We are told by university professors and Government officials that those eggs will hatch out in the spring. For instance, if you put a flower-pot full of garden soil on your kitchen shelves, you will find that as soon as the temperature reaches seventy degrees the eggs start to hatch out. That has actually taken place.

Now, why is the grasshopper menace going to reduce the wheat acreage? We are advised to sow nothing but summer fallow in that whole area. Approximately one-third of the land is summer fallow, and the other two-thirds stubble. If we follow this advice, we shall reduce the acreage in wheat much more than fifteen per cent. So I am quite sure the Government will have no trouble at all in reducing the wheat acreage. There must also be taken into account the land which will not be sown to wheat, it having been found unsuited for the purpose.

Instead of a reduction of acreage I would advocate a quota. Let the farmer grow all the wheat he wants to, but fix the amount he may take to market. Then if he grows 10,000 bushels in 1934, and his quota is 8,000 bushels,