

of order had been raised as to the propriety of my reading certain newspaper extracts. The hon. gentleman then in the chair (Mr. LaVergne) ruled that the reading of these extracts was not in order. While it is not my purpose at the present time to appeal from that ruling,—I would not seek to put Your Honour in the position which that would involve,—I think the time has come when we should have a clear and definite understanding as to just what may and may not be read in the course of a debate such as this. I have been pointing out, and have used the extracts to point out, that the country at large had put the same interpretation upon the speech of the right hon. Prime Minister as I have. I used them to show also that the conditions of agriculture which we on this side of the house have been depicting were the conditions which prevailed, according to those whose opinions I was quoting at that time. I have no more newspaper extracts to read at the moment, but I do wish to cite another opinion that came to me in regard to this matter. I may say it came to me in the course of a letter I received some weeks ago, the writer of which said something to this effect:

Even in this most favoured district—

He was speaking of one of the best districts of Manitoba.

—we have many families that would have starved this winter were it not for neighbours giving them food. One family close to town lived on nothing but potatoes for a month, and—

My correspondent adds:

—this man voted for Bennett to blast a market for his grain.

Complaints have been made from the other side of the house that we on this side are unfair in holding the government responsible entirely for the present condition. That objection, of course, would come with much better grace had not hon. gentlemen opposite, during the last session of parliament and throughout the campaign, insisted upon placing all the blame for Canada's position upon the former administration. I would not hold that the present government is responsible for the whole of the depression that exists to-day. Indeed, I believe there is a limit to the power for evil even of this government. It is not my intention, Mr. Speaker, to discuss at any great length the fiscal policy of the present government in its effect either upon our own conditions or upon the conditions abroad, either as regards the cost of production or as regards the effect which that policy has upon export markets. That possibly may be done by certain members be-

fore we get through. I do wish to say, however, that I am profoundly convinced that the fiscal policy of the present government, if not responsible for all the evils from which we suffer, has certainly done much to aggravate the conditions that prevailed last fall.

I wish now to refer to another extract by way of laying a foundation for some further remarks which I shall make. I have here an extract from the Canadian Annual Review of 1929-30, page 99. I think I shall be perfectly in order in reading it.

At Woodstock, New Brunswick, he (Mr. Bennett) disputed Mr. Mackenzie King's claim that he had reduced taxation and stated that the reduction had only taken away part of a previous increase made by the same administration. He again emphasized his determination to protect Canadian agriculture and said that he would regard it as a great responsibility if elected "to see that the collective weight and power of the Dominion is placed behind agriculture."

I wish to call attention particularly to that last statement:

To see that the collective weight and power of the Dominion is placed behind agriculture.

That is a big promise, and up to the present we have not seen any indication of its being fulfilled. We have had, it is true, what is called a new agricultural policy issued by the present Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Weir). It appeared in MacLean's Magazine and is, I believe, in the literature which is furnished in the library of the Department of Agriculture over in the west block. So that to that extent it is authoritative. To that extent it represents what is spoken of here as the collective weight and power of the Dominion being placed behind agriculture.

Let us consider them in order. First, we have a national marketing board. What that means we do not know. Then we have lower costs of production obtained by increased yield per acre. That is very good; it is the old idea of making two blades of grass grow where one formerly grew. That policy is as old as agriculture; it is not at all new, and takes no consideration whatever of marketing.

We have been told that the Minister of Agriculture is a very fine type of man, and those of us who have not had the privilege of a previous acquaintance with him have not yet had an opportunity of forming an opinion for ourselves. The sooner we get that opportunity the better we shall be pleased. Now let me say to the Minister of Agriculture that while it is very good to make two blades grow where one grew before, that in itself is not sufficient to reduce the cost of production. We must go further than that. We must not