

grain question, and in totalling up the amount applied for up to the present, it was announced that approximately a quarter million bushels of all grains is needed in the Saskatoon land office district. The Dominion Government is not only helping with regard to the land which failed to produce a crop last season, but is anxious to see that every farmer gets grain enough to seed every acre he can possibly get under crop for the coming year.

I do not mean to argue that the Government is responsible for every item that appears in one of its party newspapers. But it is responsible for the letter sent out by its commissioner in Winnipeg on which these articles are largely based and by reason of which the people have been led to believe that they were going to get seed grain.

It came as a shock when, on January 11, a letter was circulated throughout the province of Saskatchewan, sent out by the Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg, in which he withdraws altogether, in meaning if not in direct terms, the letter of October 14. We were led to believe, in October, November and December, and even up to the middle of January, that we were going to obtain seed grain in abundance, whether we were on patented or unpatented lands, and whether inside or outside the drouth-stricken area. Here is the letter, which, as I have said, was a shock to the people:

Arrangements have been made to supply seed grain to all who have lost their crop, whether on unpatented or patented land, in the following area:

Then it describes the drouth-stricken area as described by the Department of the Interior. At any rate, for three months the position was taken by every person in Saskatchewan, including the Dominion Government officials, that seed grain would be supplied, and I say we had a right to go on that assumption. If the man occupying the position of Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg sends out statements which the people of the province or others cannot rely upon, where are we to look for correct information? The Government cannot urge such an excuse. This letter which, as I say, came as a shock to the people, said that the supply of seed grain would be confined to the people in the drouth-stricken area. I have copies of letters here addressed to applicants by the Commissioner of Immigration, in reply, apparently, to requests sent in by men outside the drouth-stricken area. The first is a letter dated January 12, addressed to Mr. J. W. Whittaker, Salvador. This gentleman

[Mr. W. M. Martin.]

is within the drouth-stricken area, but, unfortunately for him, is on patented land. The letter says:

In answer to your letter to the Department of Agriculture, Regina, I have to state that this department is only making an advance of seed grain to needy homesteaders on unpatented land and who lost their crop through some calamity. All others will require to look to their local municipality or to their Provincial Government for assistance in the matter of seed grain.

That contains a mis-statement of fact, because the letter referred to says that: "the department is only making an advance of seed grain to needy homesteaders on unpatented land, and who lost their crop through some calamity." So far as the drouth-stricken area is concerned, that is not correct, because they were then supplying seed grain in the drouth-stricken area to the holders of both patented and unpatented lands.

I have another letter here of the 19th of January, from the Commissioner of Immigration to Mr. D. B. Martin:

Referring to your application for an advance of seed grain, I have to inform you that this department is only making an advance of seed grain to those in your district who are on unpatented land.

I note from your application that you only hold patented land, and it is with regret, therefore, I have to inform you that your application cannot receive consideration. You will require to look to your local municipality or to your Provincial Government for assistance in the matter of seed grain.

The position in certain parts of that province to-day, owing to the people having been misled, is one of confusion, even of chaos. The records of the department and the records of the Department of Agriculture at Regina and Edmonton would indicate that there are thousands of applications from farmers outside the drouth-stricken area in both provinces for seed grain, perhaps more in Saskatchewan than in Alberta. These men have all been led to believe that they would get seed grain. They have gone on that assumption, and to-day I say they are entitled to seed grain.

I have here a book which I obtained since coming to Ottawa a few days ago, published by the Dominion Department of Agriculture, called "Patriotism and Production." It is a very admirable publication and contains many statements of value to the people of Canada, whether members of the agricultural population or otherwise. In looking over that book I find, over the signature of the Minister of Agriculture, this statement: