

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: May I tell the honourable gentleman that there never was a crop failure in the West?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Well, there is a failure in crop prices.

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: There may be a crop failure in a certain district, but there never has been a crop failure in the entire West.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: If a failure in crop prices puts an end to the purchasing power of the Western farmers, then, of course, we in the East ask ourselves how they live. I should like to be able to feel that our Western farmers, come what may, can always be sure of their three meals daily. It was to help make such an assurance possible that a couple of sessions ago we passed an Act empowering corporations to subscribe for the securities of another corporation formed for the purpose of lending money to the farmers so as to enable them to develop diversified farming. The situation in the West is to my mind one of the most engrossing problems that we have to face, and the chief hopes for improvement that I can at present see are founded on a reduction of the wheat output, with a view to bringing about higher prices, and also on the beginning that has been made towards diversified farming, which when carried a little farther will enable the farmers to live off their farms.

A matter to which we devoted our attention for some time last session was the railway situation. I doubt that it has improved very much in the meantime. As a result of co-operation the two railways have succeeded in reducing some of their expenditures. I was somewhat surprised to find that the Board whose appointment seemed so urgently necessary a year ago was appointed only on the first of this month. On looking into the economies that have been realized by mutual agreement between the two companies I find they have resulted from a reduction in competition, and I venture to say that every saving that will take place in the future will be brought about by the same means. Yet there may still be life in the slogan, "Competition ever." I am not bowing the knee to that, although I recognize that competition is a remarkable thing when we can afford such a luxury. I think the motor truck and the auto bus will permanently furnish the competition that may be needed.

We have another very serious problem, which perhaps I should have mentioned before,

namely, that of unemployment. The policy of a return to the land is an excellent one, but I doubt that we can successfully transfer some tens of thousands of people from the towns and cities to the land. A large number of those people have grown up in the towns and cities and have been artisans all their lives. When I think of them and of the inevitably slow process of reabsorbing into industry those who are now unemployed, I feel more and more convinced that if our capitalistic system is to survive we shall have to establish a contributory unemployment insurance system to tide our people over periods of economic depression. I say that it is the duty of the thinking people of this country, of all those interested in industry and in other urban activities, to try to find a way to establish, with the co-operation of the provincial and federal governments, a contributory unemployment insurance scheme, in order that the present capitalistic system under which we live may be continued. For no system, however strong and solid it may be, can permanently endure if a large portion of the population is unable to make a living under it.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN: Honourable senators, it is because of long-tried custom, which I suppose makes it a matter of duty for me, that I am impelled to say something at this time, and not because of any firm conviction that I can add materially to the debate and the information of honourable members.

The honourable leader on the other side (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) dealt at some length in his address with the League of Nations, on which subject he above all of us is amply qualified to speak. In his comments thereon I find very little with which I could disagree. To the onlooker there is no question at all that when the then President of the United States advanced certain conditions precedent to the establishment of peace he committed his country and the honour of his country to the maintenance of the principles involved in those conditions and to their incorporation in the structure of the world. It does seem difficult to believe that a nation so committed should later quietly withdraw from the responsibility thus entailed, and seek to avoid the co-operation without which great questions of international moment never can be settled except by resort to war. We all have been in a measure disappointed with the effectiveness of the League of Nations, and we are all disposed, and I think rightly disposed, to attribute its degree of ineffectiveness to the