

day. On Saturday evening some of us were accused of holding up the estimates because we wished to say a few words in connection with agriculture. I think to-day, of all the industries in Canada, agriculture finds itself in the most precarious situation. From one end of Canada to the other we find farmers in all branches of agriculture complaining and wondering what the end will be. I do not care what branch of farming activity they carry on, whether it be wheat or fruit or cattle or dairying; we find them all bitterly complaining that they are unable to make ends meet because prices to-day are only about fifty per cent of what they were a year ago. As I say, from one end of Canada to the other we hear these mutterings, these groans and denunciations of present conditions. Farmers see nothing before them but darkness and blankness; there is not a rift in the clouds as far as agriculture is concerned, yet every man must know that if as a country we are ever to get out of this depression the first people to feel the effects of better times must be the primary producers, the agriculturists.

During the last election, a little over a year ago, the unemployed were told they were going to have lots of work. There was to be work for all at good wages; no one was going to be hungry. There is no doubt also that the farmer was led to believe, either directly or indirectly, that he would be able to market anything he could produce, at a good price. He was going to get real money for his butter and eggs and wheat, and if there was one thing for which the Liberal government was condemned during the last election it was that Mr. Dunning did not step out and sell Canada's wheat at a good price. Why did he not sell it? That was the cry. What was he doing? We were told to wait until the Conservative government got into power, they would sell it. They are selling it, all right; they are giving it away now. That was the whole cry during the campaign, and say what you like now the farmer believed in his heart that when the Conservative government came into power he was going to get a better price for his product. You may side-step that all you like, but it is a fact. That is why so many farmers voted Conservative; they voted in favour of those promises. All I can say is that they are reaping their whirlwind now, and they regret their action most deeply.

Well, the election was held and we came to Ottawa for the session of the house. Hon. members from western Canada demanded from the government time after time what was their program in regard to agriculture.

All the press throughout Canada proclaimed the present minister the greatest Minister of Agriculture we ever had; they said he was a wonder man. We hoped he was; we really and sincerely hoped he was such a man, because we thought that if ever there was a time when agriculture needed a real minister this was the time. We wanted that to be so; do not make any mistake about that. As farmers we were all anxious to see the farmer get out of his present condition. Well, we came here and asked him for his policy. We continued to ask and finally, after a lot of bantering and talking, and after the session had been going on for two or three months, he made a speech in this house. At that time he was supposed to tell us what was his program, but he started in and took a long time to tell us he was a new man in politics and that he was the graduate of a university. I do not know what that had to do with it, but he took a long time to make those statements. Then he made nothing but a political speech, the most rabid political speech we have had in this house. The very first thing he did was to attack the former Minister of Agriculture and tell us he was the worst minister we ever had. Before he even had his own seat warm he was telling us that the last minister was the worst minister Canada ever had.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): What authority has the hon. gentleman for making such a statement?

Mr. DONNELLY: I am not allowed to look up Hansard; if I do so I will be called out of order, so I am just giving the impression we got.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Take it back.

Mr. DONNELLY: Take back nothing.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I will have to ask the hon. gentleman to take it back.

Mr. DONNELLY: I am quite ready to take back the words, but that was the impression left with us and with the country. The minister said, "Look; he left nothing outside Regina but a trail of weeds," but what do we find? The trail of weeds in Saskatchewan was left by the Union government, the Conservative government sitting in Ottawa at that time.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I would like the hon. gentleman to adhere to a certain degree of accuracy. I did not say anything of the kind, and I do not think the hon. gentleman can blame the Union government for spreading weeds around Regina.