

Canada is in a far worse condition than it was twelve months ago, that there are far more farmers insolvent and on the brink of bankruptcy than there ever have been in the history of the west. I am speaking of western Canada.

An hon. MEMBER: And eastern Canada too.

Mr. GARDINER: I am only speaking of western Canada, because, as I have already said, I do not wish to speak for a part of the country that I do not understand and do not know very much about. But it is my firm conviction that so far as western agriculture is concerned, unless some very drastic measures are taken very soon, we shall have the bulk of our farmers in such an insolvent state that even under better conditions they can never hope to recover their title of ownership in their farms. To-day the equity of the farmer in western Canada in his holdings is slipping from him gradually.

An hon. MEMBER: Gradually?

An hon. MEMBER: It has gone!

Mr. GARDINER: I am trying to put the best light on the situation. I do not want to paint the picture too black, yet I wish to tell the situation as I see it. The equity of the western farmer to-day, I say, is slipping from him gradually—probably more rapidly than gradually. As far as I can see there is no hope for the western farmer except on two conditions: first of all, he must be relieved of some of the responsibilities and debts which he has incurred and is carrying; secondly, he must be relieved of some of the high interest rates which he is paying to-day. Unless either or both of those conditions are met I am afraid that we are going to find our greatest basic industry beyond hope of recovery even if better times do come.

It has been stated that the condition of agriculture is a national problem. Indeed the Prime Minister last session, referring to a certain section of Canada, said that in that part of the country a national calamity had occurred. So far as I see we cannot confine this calamity with respect to agriculture to any section of Canada; it applies throughout the length and breadth of the country. Consequently, if this is a national calamity national means should be taken to see that the industry is not submerged. That being the case, I can assure the Prime Minister that with regard to unemployment and farm relief we shall be very happy indeed to give him the fullest cooperation and offer him any

suggestions that we think will assist the people over the difficult path they are now treading.

Time will not permit me to go into some matters which I should like to have dealt with. The world has a problem on its hands, and while we can do something to help the international situation, my judgment is that we can do a great deal within Canada to make conditions much better. The problems which we have before us to-day arise out of our economic or social system; they are inherent in the system itself, they grow out of the system. Therefore we must first understand the system before we can successfully deal with the problems arising out of it. Under present conditions we have some striking contrasts. For instance, we have luxury—starvation; we have ease—overwork; we have wealth—poverty; we have abundance—scarcity: all existing under and part of the same system and indeed growing out of it. To explain that system would take more time than I have at my disposal; therefore it would be useless for me to make the attempt. But may I say, Mr. Speaker, before I take my seat, that I am disappointed with the proposals which the government have made before the house. We can only hope that before the session ends the government will bring such proposals before parliament as will at least be effective in controlling some of the problems with which we are now confronted. If this course is contemplated by the government, I hope they will acquaint the house with their proposals as soon as possible, and so give us an opportunity of dealing with them at an early date.

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Témiscouata): It is not my purpose, Mr. Speaker, to speak at any great length in this debate. I share the views expressed by the hon. member who has just taken his seat (Mr. Gardiner) on unemployment of labour and agricultural distress, and I will have the opportunity to discuss those problems later during the session.

The first question I heard from members of both sides of the house when I arrived in Ottawa for the session was: What about that famous station? It is my present duty to make a very short and nonpartisan speech, and in connection with that "famous station" I desire in chronological order to thank the whole press gallery and the daily papers of Ottawa, Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, especially *Le Soleil*, the *Globe*, the *London Advertiser*, the *Montreal Standard* and even the *Mail and Empire*, for the support they