

Unemployment Continuance Act

From Swalwell district, a district which until recent years has been fairly prosperous and in which there are many excellent farms, such as those described by the Prime Minister, comes the following:

No words of mine can describe the hopeless conditions which the people of this western country are facing. They are not living, but leading an existence; everything has to be sold at a loss.

I have no desire, Mr. Speaker, to prolong the discussion. I do submit to the government, however, that its duties extend to the districts I have mentioned just as urgently and as definitely as to the areas in the province of Saskatchewan to which reference has been made.

I know the Minister of Agriculture is not unsympathetic, and I say to him that in the southern half of my constituency, due to the inability to supply proper food and clothing, there has been a considerable increase in minor ailments, many of which may lead to serious complaints such as tuberculosis, pneumonia and so on. For years the doctors in those areas have not been properly paid. I have before me some very harrowing letters from doctors in that connection. I ask that adequate provision be made for the medical care of these people who are suffering under present conditions not only tremendous losses but dire destitution. A doctor in one of these districts writes me as follows:

Next door to me a child was prostrated with double lobar pneumonia. The widowed mother who was receiving government aid applied to the village authorities for medical treatment for her child. The village council refused. She was already owing me over \$100 for past services, and did not call me. However as soon as I heard of the case I went without being called. Now 99 per cent of all our patients, not mine particularly, are cases of destitution. How is a local doctor to stand the financial strain of treating all these cases?

In one of his communications this doctor gave me facts relating to amounts of remuneration he had been able to receive during the last year, and I believe the figures would astonish the house. In May 1930 his earnings were \$126 and his receipts only \$12.50; in May 1931 his earnings were \$400, and his receipts only \$77.50. Hon. members will notice the increase in calls for his services. In June 1930 his earnings were \$187, and his actual receipts \$27.50. In June 1931 his earnings were \$298.50 and his receipts \$8.50. Nothing could indicate more definitely the very serious condition of affairs in so far as the physical health of the people in those districts is concerned.

I do not need to stress that point further, but I am satisfied the matter deserves the

[Mr. E. J. Garland.]

particular attention of the minister. The doctor to which I have referred writes further:

My practice, which means greater expense on my pocket book, has increased perceptibly, while my receipts have decreased more rapidly.

Further on he states:

The question is cannot something be done for the struggling, self-denying, starving, philanthropic rural physicians whose services cannot be dispensed with by the poor impoverished settlers of those drought areas of western Canada. We have appealed to the municipal and provincial authorities, but they claim they are financially unable to help us, while they recognize that widespread indigency is the rule now and not the exception as it was a few years ago.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the position. I could amplify the statements made by the hon. member for Yorkton; if I were permitted to do so I could talk from now until six o'clock concerning those conditions. I wonder if hon. members realize that between the years 1929 and 1931 there has been a decline in the price received by the wheat growers for their product of \$360,000,000. Between the years 1930 and 1931, one year only, there was a decline of \$202,000,000. So the story goes. I pick up another extract which is as follows:

With 2,000,000 pounds of creamery butter awaiting export in western Canada, probability is that the present record low price for butter fat, 12 cents a pound, will fall still further, according to H. S. Brockner, sales manager of the Alberta Dairy Pool Limited.

I have a clipping before me taken from the Calgary Herald, a daily newspaper very friendly to this ministry. It is as follows:

Three Hills, Feb. 23.—Further examples of the topsy turvy condition of the markets have been given by local farmers. Recently a farmer shipped a case containing 21 fine pullets to Calgary. Eight of these weighed 30 pounds and graded No. 2. They brought him the munificent sum of \$1.50, being five cents per pound. The remainder of the shipment, weighing 33 pounds, was marked "no value."

The freight charge on the whole shipment was \$1.50, and the other charges were 25 cents, so the adventurous shipper was out 25 cents. He lost his 21 pullets and suffered 25 cents loss.

Another story is told of a farmer who shipped 160 pounds of wool for sale and received a three-cent postage stamp in return. He was lucky compared to another who shipped wool and did not get enough returns to pay shipping charges. It would be interesting to know who got the pullets—and at what price. Also who got the wool—and at what price.

Three years of crop failures have brought about these pitiful conditions. A correspondent from Standard writes:

The five cent bonus on wheat gives to the man who doesn't need it, and the man who needs it the most gets nothing. For example a man with a 40 bushel per acre crop gets \$2 per acre bonus, a man with no crop at all gets