

SPEECH OF T. W. CALDWELL, M.P.
(Continued from page 2)

from our friends to my right with regard to the plight of the Canadian manufacturer and what this tariff will do to him. I am not contending that the tariff is the whole cause of the conditions that I am going to place on the record of this House just now. I hold in my hand a copy of the Royal Gazette of the date of April 30 and I find 22 farms advertised for sale under mortgage in New Brunswick. I wonder if people who are waiting about the manufacturers have any thought for the agriculturists of this country. I do not think if a man wished that he could attribute this to the present budget because a man does not get sold out under a mortgage in one year, possibly not in ten years. A man who has money on mortgage wants to make an investment, and as long as the farmer is able to pay his interest he is not sold out. I have never known of a case where foreclosure was made in the farmer was able to pay the interest. But there are 22 farms advertised for sale in one issue of the Royal Gazette for April.

MR. MOTHERWELL: What size farms?

MR. CALDWELL: It is covering pretty well the province. These are not all the farms advertised for sale in the province. I have a copy of the Weekly Mail, Fredericton, New Brunswick, in which there were four farms advertised for sale under mortgage, in one issue. If you pick up any weekly paper in that province you will find these advertisements. People will say that this is a pretty doleful picture, and I am glad the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell) is in his place, because I want to quote from the Monthly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, February 15, 1924, from the crop reports of the province summarized from the reports of the crop correspondents, January 31, 1924, as follows:

"Maritime provinces. Throughout the Maritime provinces the open winter has been very beneficial for live stock. There is an abundance of feed everywhere and cattle are in good condition. The market has been dull, and farmers are realizing but low prices. A correspondent at Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, writes: 'In many cases farmers deem it more economical to slaughter some of their stock rather than winter it with no prospect of market next spring.' Prices for lambs and sheep are about the same as last year, whilst those of swine dropped badly during the summer. Poultry prices were particularly disappointing at Christmas time on account of the mild and unreasonable weather during December. Buildings have increased in value the last few years, while farm land has decreased. Help is lured by the wages since the drop in value of farm products. Some farmers talk of leaving their land if conditions do not improve."

I am pleased to see some members from Nova Scotia in their seats. I attended with them a meeting in this House not long ago to listen to a discourse by a man who had been making a survey of vacant lands in the Maritime Provinces, where there was a possibility of settling immigrants. I do not remember the number of farms he mentioned in any one given county, but I know it ran into large figures. He was asked how many of these farms had complete buildings, and I think he answered 60 per cent. I think one member from Nova Scotia asked the question, and received the answer that 60 per cent had complete buildings and a large number were vacant, and they were surveying with the idea of settling the newcomers on the farm, so that the statement that many farmers would leave the farms if conditions do not improve is mild indeed. I will not deal with all the provinces, but I will take the province of Quebec, because we have been told it is the most prosperous in the Dominion, and possibly the farmers in Quebec are in the best circumstances of all the farmers in the Dominion. The report from Quebec reads as follows:

"Owing to the mild weather of the first part of the season, the supply of fodder was conserved, and the cattle were kept in good condition. The value

of farms and of cattle has declined during the last few years. There is practically no sale for cattle and horses. Milk cows and poultry are about the only descriptions yielding any revenue. Correspondents state that if the situation does not improve, many farmers will have to give up their land."

"Lambs are the best sellers and the prices quoted for wool show some increase over last year."

This is the interesting part of it: "Very few farm laborers are hired by the year, and farmers, where possible, manage without help, as they cannot afford to pay wages."

I do not know whether our city men realize what this means to a farmer, but I know—and I have farmed under those conditions years ago as well as recently—about not being able to hire farm help. It means that the wife must go out and help on the farm, do work that the man cannot do alone. It means, in all too many cases, that children are kept from school who should be in school and are thereby deprived of getting an education, which feature is the saddest of all.

By the way, I am sorry that the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Graham) is not present, because I have a little crow to pluck with him about farm help in the Maritime provinces in the harvest season. Last year, just about the time when we got ready to harvest our potato crop, which is the crop on which we require the most help, a crop that takes a great deal of help, I saw the usual advertisement of cheap farm excursions to the Canadian West for farm help.

I immediately sat down and wrote to the minister calling his attention to this, also calling his attention to the fact that, due to depressed times in the Maritime provinces and to the lure of good wages in the United States, many of our young men had left the Maritime provinces and gone to the United States; that help was very scarce. Most of our farmers in the potato growing belt hire their men by the summer; they have to do so because there is a continuous summer's work in cultivating and spraying potatoes. What happens when those posters are put up on fences, barns and every other place where they can stick them, advertising a cheap rate to the Canadian West? Your hired man puts in his team at six o'clock and he is in such a hurry, he has hardly time to feed them. He tells you that he is going on that harvest excursion next morning. That is after he has been paid good wages all summer and possibly been not overly busy all the time, so that he may be available in the rush season for the potato harvest. I got a reply from the Minister of Railways and Canals stating that this was a matter, not for the government, but for the railway management. I do not agree with the minister. In the matter of inducing people to move from one part of the country to another, it is not for the railway management but for the government to take means to see that help is evenly distributed. If they endeavor to get help for some part of the country that is in need of it, I hope they will not rob the Maritime provinces of the few men who they are able to retain for the harvest in the fall of the year.

If they need help for the western harvest fields—and I realize they do—and I do not object to their getting it—let them bring it from where they can without robbing the Maritime provinces. Let them go to the bread line in the cities. Of course, I realize that very few of those men will go to the country; they want to be able to go to the pictures at night.

I wish to quote from the records of the special committee on Agricultural Conditions which sat last year to show the other side of the picture. I have endeavored to give, as briefly as I can, just what is happening to agriculturists in the Maritime provinces, and I think we have had proof enough of conditions in the other provinces. Last year we had all classes of people before us. Some were summoned and some appeared voluntarily. I want to quote from the statements of some manufacturers who were before the committee. I do not wish to be unfair to anybody, nor call a particular attention to any manufacturer in Canada and, therefore, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will omit the names. This particular manufacturer who appeared before our committee painted a very doleful picture of the condition of his industry for the two previous years. We took his statement and we believed it as being possibly correct. He did not, however, state that they had lost money because they could not manufacture the article that they were manufacturing for the prices that they were receiving, but they had lost money because they were not selling; they were doing no business and they were maintaining a big overhead which was eating up, not only their profits, but their capital. After listening to this very patiently, our chairman asked this question:

"You brought forward a rather doleful picture of the last two years, and I said, to be fair, we should have a ten-year statement. Do you think

there is any objection to giving that?—A. I think I have that, Mr. Chairman, and if you would like to consider it, I will pass it to you, and I would like you to consider it yourself, or with any members of the committee, but I prefer not to have it on the record."

That is, he offered to hand it to the chairman to consider it himself or with any member of his committee, but he refused to have it put on the record. If his condition was bad, why would he refuse to give us the required information? Because no man, I do not care how sharp he is, could form an opinion of the condition of any business by the condition during the two years of which he had given us the operation and cost in very minute detail. We had, however, before us another manufacturer who was more frank, and with your permission, Sir, without giving the name, I will also read a few questions and answers from his man's evidence. The first question and answer which I wish to quote are as follows:

"I think you told us your capital at the start was \$50,000?—A. \$125,000."

"Q. \$60,000 paid up in cash?"

"Q. What is your present worth?"

A.—This Company was formed in 1903 and had been in operation for eighteen years at the time when this evidence was given.

"A. Our present worth on July 31, 1922, surplus \$12,500,000, capital, \$7,000,000—about \$20,000,000."

This is quite interesting. Starting with a capital of \$60,000, they had increased their worth to \$20,000,000 in working capital and in the cost of their plant. We were naturally quite anxious to know how this capital had been increased from \$60,000 to \$20,000,000. There is, however, another question which comes first:

"Q. How much dividends have you paid on that?—A. Over what period?"

"Q. In the whole period?—A. \$10,000,000 in cash and \$6,000,000 in stock."

The next answer is very interesting:

"Q. How has the capital increased to the present amount?—A. By earnings. There was never any fresh money taken in."

I will admit that that is a very frank statement. Starting with a capital of \$60,000, admitting there was no further capital taken in, they had increased their worth to \$20,000,000 by sides paying to the shareholders \$10,000,000 in actual cash dividends.

Mr. MITCHELL: What line of business was that?

MR. CALDWELL: Manufacturer of automobiles, and by the way, I think there should be a reduction in automobiles this year. We require cheap automobiles and especially trucks. In New Brunswick, due to the shortage and high cost of help, many of our farmers buy trucks to haul their potatoes to market when they live any distance from the railway, and I think it would be a boon to the farmers to take the duty off trucks and cheap cars. I say that in view of some of these statements it is unfair for hon. gentlemen to accuse the government of any attempt to secure the support of the Progressives in this House through a reduction in the duties on agricultural implements and other tools of industry. I would strongly commend to the careful perusal of my hon. friends the evidence that was

(Continued on last page)

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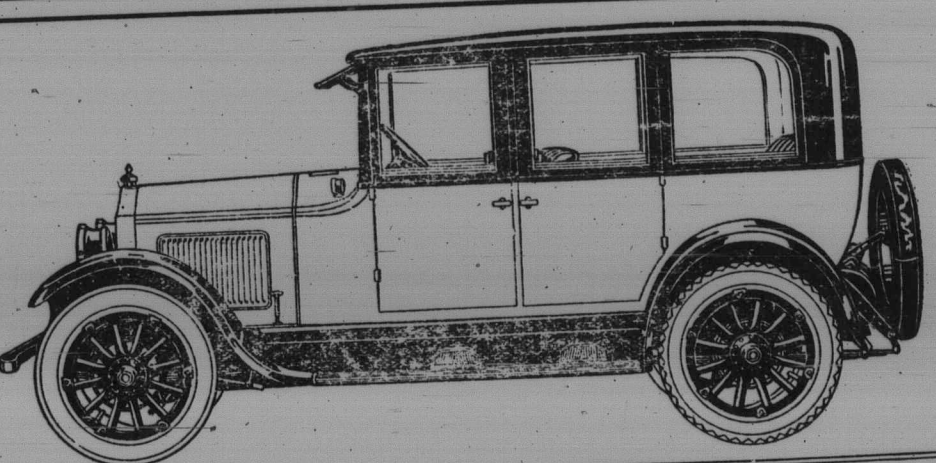
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