

executive charged with responsibility discharges its duties as such, and comes back to parliament and asks for vindication and support. If it does not receive it it goes out of office; if it does, it remains in office. In the case of the West Indies agreement, negotiated by the right hon. gentleman and his friends, they negotiated a contract which involved this country in certain obligations that affected the whole country because the taxpayers have to pay about a million dollars a year as a result of it. This is done in the same way as all obligations and agreements are entered into by the executive.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: If parliament had had or were to have opportunity to approve the agreement there might be some force in what the Prime Minister says. But apparently the agreement is in force now, and this house has not approved its provisions and has had no opportunity to consider it in any particular, nor is it likely to have such opportunity.

Mr. BENNETT: So were the others in force, as soon as the contracts were made for the building of the ships and matters of that kind. As a matter of fact it is a question whether this agreement requires the approval of parliament; I am rather advised that it does not.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Does the Prime Minister intend to submit it for approval?

Mr. BENNETT: That I have not decided, because it may or may not be necessary.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): We will surely have a chance to discuss it in the house?

Mr. BENNETT: There is the widest opportunity for discussion in connection with the estimates, and to make any motion thought desirable for that purpose.

Mr. YOUNG: The Prime Minister made a statement a few moments ago that a way had been found of growing wheat in France much more cheaply than formerly. Can he give any figures as to production costs there?

Mr. BENNETT: The information obviously would be available, but I do not carry it in my head, I hardly expected to be asked questions of that kind now. I dare say the hon. gentleman himself has a fair knowledge of what production costs have been since nitrates have been taken from the atmosphere by an electrical process instead of being imported from Chile. But I have no figures before me.

[Mr. Bennett.]

I shall not discuss this matter at greater length beyond saying that it will be within the memory of most hon. members that the former Minister of Trade and Commerce stated that the question of the sale of wheat was not one with respect to which the Department of Trade and Commerce could offer any assistance. He said the federal government could not do that, that it was a matter of supply and demand. We have ventured into the field because the provinces concerned as units of this confederation have asked our assistance, and while personally I have always felt that these are matters which must be considered and dealt with as part of a broad world plan, it is quite apparent that in dealing with questions of wheat there are only four exporting countries, and if the importing countries are going to take the position they have taken I believe it is the duty of the dominion to lend any assistance it can. So far as that is concerned we will be very happy indeed to afford any further information which may be necessary, as it is not clear that it is essential that the agreement should be submitted to parliament for ratification, involving as it does the jurisdiction of the provinces and, to a more limited extent, that of the dominion. At the moment the provinces have expressed their view that the effect of the grasshopper plague and the drought will be such as automatically to bring about a reduction in acreage which will be somewhat less than that provided for by agreement. Because of that fact it is difficult to express any very definite opinion as to what might or what might not have to be done. This, however, I should like to say: I did not think yesterday that the right hon. gentleman did himself justice when he endeavoured to parody a well known prayer from the Anglican prayer book. I did not think so, and I do not now. I am not unfamiliar with the position to which he was referring. I, too, have received communications from those who believe it is wicked and contrary to God's will to interfere with the production of a country. I was not unfamiliar with the matter to which the right hon. gentleman referred. In one instance, however, after pointing out the facts which I have related, I received from the correspondent a reply which indicated entire agreement with the view expressed. Because people pray for peace in our time it does not follow that in times of peril they do not make good soldiers. And because we pray for plenty there is no reason why we might not have to take disciplinary measures to ensure it. Upon reflection I cannot but think the right hon. gentleman will feel he has not done