

tural people will have to begin by helping themselves. They can do that in a great many ways, and it is my view that they have a perfect right to get into politics and try to help themselves in that way also.

All artificial restrictions must be removed and agriculture must have a fair show. And in speaking of agriculture, I want to speak for all Canada, because I go back to where I was and say again that we have got to solve this problem before we can have a prosperous country. We generally estimate the value of our products by what they will purchase. I suppose that down in the Maritime provinces, in the constituency of the hon. member for Victoria and Carleton (Mr. Caldwell) they estimate the value of their products by calculating how many commodities a bag of potatoes will purchase. Out in the western provinces we put it this way: How much can you purchase for a bushel of wheat? Money, after all, is only a counter, and that is the way we get at values. A bushel of wheat cannot purchase very much in western Canada to-day, and the large overhead expense is one of the reasons why we are in a difficult position.

I notice also that a bill is foreshadowed "to safeguard the interests of consumers and producers." Now, we will have a splendid thing if we can get any bill that will safeguard the consumer and the producer. I heard it stated not very long ago by a very high economic authority that in a great many instances there was a spread of 300 per cent between what the manufacturer or the farmer got and what the consumer paid; on an average the spread was 100 per cent. That is something that ought to be remedied; this whole question of the distribution and handling of goods and products from the producer to the consumer is well worth the attention of the government. But we have a policy that does encourage trusts, mergers and combines and makes it possible to have those very "gentlemen's agreements" that are the source of difficulty, from the point of view of the consumer at least. I think we might have a system of economics that would remove a great many of these troubles without very much investigation.

Just a word in connection with the cattle embargo. There was some little dispute yesterday as to whether the embargo was actually removed or not. At all events, I am inclined to believe that it is going to be removed, and I am glad that this is so, because from my knowledge of agriculture, even in the western provinces, I know that their salvation depends to a very large extent upon

finding a market for their cattle. The lack of such a market has been one of the causes of bad times in the last few seasons, when there was no market whatever for our cattle. It would perhaps astonish the House were I to mention the price at which cattle were sold on the public yards in the city of Winnipeg last fall. In some cases a car of cattle scarcely paid the expense of shipping them to market. Agriculture can never prosper under such conditions. Though the removing of the embargo will help to relieve the situation, I am inclined to believe that the best market we can possibly have is that great market to the south of us, and I hope every endeavour will be made to see that that gate is opened to us once again, if it be at all possible.

I want to say a few words on the subject of economy. Economy is a word we hear repeated over and over again everywhere these days. We must economize and taxation must be reduced. The burden of taxation is becoming almost too heavy to be borne. The country is weary of the load and some remedy must be found. A halt must be called in expenditure, or we shall find the ship on the rocks in a very short time. I am sorry to see that we are still adding to our national debt. This cannot go on indefinitely. It does not take a wise man to see that something is bound to happen unless some remedy is applied very promptly. I am willing to admit that we have been passing through a period of extravagance. Individuals, corporations, and governments have all been extravagant, or, I will put it this way, too optimistic; there is no question about it. But we have learned our lesson. We in this Dominion, have spent the money, and we have now to meet the bills. We are beginning to practise economy, and I am sorry to see that the Dominion of Canada has added to its public debt during the past year. That is a cause for deep disappointment to all well-wishers of our country. It is all very well to devise measures for extracting money from the pockets of the people—and I pay this tribute to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) he is an adept at that; he deserves all the credit that can come to him as the financier for the government—at the same time, getting money in order to spend it will not solve any of our problems. I think all parties are agreed to-day that something must be done to reduce expenditure. We might have some measure of civil service reform, for instance. I believe that the government of the country is costing too much, and that economies could be effected in that direction. I think the three parties in this House might well get together