

Agricultural Conditions

statements to which I shall refer were made at a time when he was not averse to running down the country or crying blue ruin, and at a time when on every platform he seemed to have one desire at least, and that was to let not only this country but the world at large know exactly how badly off we were.

I shall quote to the house some of the expression used by my right hon. friend during the election campaign with regard to conditions in this country, and then let us see if this is the same gentleman who to-night has condemned everybody who has attempted to tell the truth with regard to conditions as they exist in Canada to-day. Speaking at Toronto he said:

To-day we have unemployment on a scale never before known.

Speaking at Inverness he said:

Canada's national resources are being depleted.

Again speaking at Toronto he said:

Canadian industries are dying.

Speaking of trade generally, he said:

Thus Canada is becoming more and more a dependent, and less and less independent economically. . . .

Mr. BENNETT: That is true.

Mr. RALSTON: The Ottawa Citizen carried the statement from him that "industry was languishing." Speaking at Regina, he said:

Now we have unemployment, people walking our streets, men and women hungry,—we have all these things in this great rich country.

Speaking of the then Prime Minister he said:

How ever blind he may be to your future, and deaf to your present needs, surely he cannot stop his ears with smug complacency and self esteem to the cry that carries across the nation, the cry of the destitute and hungry, the cry of mothers and fathers and little children who call to us as Christians and as Canadians to heal their pain.

And he spoke of "this time of national distress."

Mr. BENNETT: And we voted the \$20,000,000.

Mr. RALSTON: Those are statements made at that time by my right hon. friend in regard to conditions in this country. Speaking of the west, as reported in a speech at Winnipeg:

After stressing the economic ills of western Canada, showing that the prairies could not sell "wheat, foodstuffs, cattle and dairy products"

[Mr. Ralston.]

I ask hon. members if there could be any statements which would be less likely to obtain credit for the farmers than a statement of that kind made on a platform by the hon. gentleman who to-night condemned anybody who attempts to say that the farmer is not at the present time in a prosperous condition. Speaking at Sydney he said:

Now my fellow Canadians are out of a job, children hungry, mothers hungry, men willing to work but unable to get work

Those are pictures which were painted last July by my right hon. friend. While it may be good politics for him to rise in his place at this time and lecture hon. gentlemen for having dared to come here and state conditions as they exist, I do not believe it adds anything to the debate, or that the country will be at all misled by the attitude which he takes.

He endeavours to salve his conscience, if I may use that term without disrespect, by saying that he has faith in this country. I want to state to him that he has not a monopoly on faith. All of us believe in the future of Canada, but we believe that its highest development in the future can best be attained by knowing all the conditions which require attention at any particular period and by endeavouring to remedy those conditions. Particularly I would call upon my right hon. friend, who was so lavish in his promises, to bring out his remedy and have the changes brought about. To-night my right hon. friend, amid loud cheers and applause from his followers, said that given health and strength and a term of office he would bring this country through its difficulties. May I say to my right hon. friend that there is always a time when a note falls due, and he already has had nine months in which to fulfil his promises. Considering the conditions which have been pointed out and which are said to exist in this country one would not be led to think that so far he had been very successful in his efforts; and one can be excused if he has considerable doubt as to whether the term of office for which he asks will be very fruitful of results. He is no doubt entitled to a reasonable time to bring about changes, but he must remember that the promises he made when he painted these conditions were promises for immediate action, and there was no suggestion that we would have to await the turn of a cycle of depression and for economic readjustment; the change was going to be made out of the air and in some way entirely unknown to those who were not "in the secret" when he