

I hesitate to make my next remark in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), but perhaps he may be made aware of the statement. We recall how the Minister of Agriculture swelled with pride at having so materially assisted in improving substantially the financial position of the province from which he comes. Remembering that, in the final analysis, public revenues must be extracted from the public, how then can it be maintained that a province which improves its lot by 3.4 millions ceases to require assistance, while another one having bettered its position twenty-five times more than the first must continue to receive assistance? Either the Bank of Canada has mislaid logic, or else the financial administration in the second province was twenty-five times worse than in the first one. If this be true, then Victor Hugo's immortal story of reward and punishment could nowhere be more justly applied than in this case. All hon. members recall the story of the individual who permitted a cannon to become loose in the hold of a ship and then, at the risk of his life, succeeded in spiking it in place again. The offender was decorated for his bravery, and was later shot because of his negligence.

I deeply sympathize with the people of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. They will be taxed to the breaking point to pay the bondholders their blood money and will be compelled to borrow to feed themselves. In the province of Alberta, too, they have tried in every possible way, short of selling themselves into abject slavery, to refund their debts. But the conditions they were asked to fulfil were conditions differing from those facing the other provinces. It was held at that time that Alberta must agree to a loan council scheme before they would be granted any money; but since that time other provinces have been granted funds time and again without being compelled to agree to any such refunding scheme. So I say the province of Alberta has definitely tried to materially improve its conditions. They found that interest charges and payments outside the province were heavy and certainly not warranted by the conditions obtaining at that time.

The people of Alberta have faced the depression with courage, and plenty of it. The farmers cheerfully carried on although their revenues decreased. At the same time wages of employees decreased. Everybody's revenue was smaller, and the people came to the conclusion, as the Prime Minister who is not now in his seat has often told us, that the wages of money must not be greater than the wages

of men. Could the Prime Minister to-day stand in his place and blame those people for following the counsel which he himself has given, and which to a great extent he has offered in many parts of western Canada?

Notwithstanding the bank's report, let us see if Alberta deserves consideration. I believe that on this point my hon. leader (Mr. Blackmore) has shown that so far as orthodox finance is concerned, Alberta has tried to do its share. I do admit that I have not the patience of my leader, and on questions such as these I hesitate to say that Alberta should not have gone ahead a bit faster simply because she required assistance. When the bondholders of the province saw their plight, they should have given consideration to the matter. They had twenty years in which to act, but they did not choose to do so. They kept insisting on the last farthing of their interest. So I say: Is it any wonder the people of Alberta finally came to the conclusion that the wages of money should not be greater than the wages of men? I do not intend to go further on that point.

I wish simply to say that I am not a provincial member and I am not concerned with the manner in which they are doing things in the province of Alberta. But I am a citizen of Alberta, and as such it is my duty to stand in my place and to protest against the discrimination by this government against Alberta. I know the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) will rise in his place and say: "Why, this was done at the request of the premier; this was done by an impartial commission; this was done by someone with whom we have no connection"—but that is not true.

The Bank of Canada is the creature of this government, and I say the government cannot forever escape responsibility for the actions of its creature. The government cannot forever hide behind commissions; it cannot forever evade responsibility by hiding behind such bulwarks. Commissions are falling upon Canada like April showers. We have a commission for this, that, and every other thing, and we seek to place these commissions in front of our government to the point where we have succeeded in creating government within a government. Perhaps by that means we are trying to escape our responsibility. I repeat, this government cannot forever get away from its responsibility by hiding behind a bulwark of commissions. The Bank of Canada is a creature of the government, and so I say that the government cannot hide behind the bank's report which discriminates against the province of Alberta.