

do not believe Mr. Bracken needs any testimony from me, I should like to say that he was a first-class premier of a first-class province, but his field of operations of necessity was somewhat circumscribed. I can understand why Mr. Bracken would wish to sit in the federal parliament. He is not an old man, and I presume he is actuated by a desire to continue his services for Canada. As I said before, however, his field of operations in the province was somewhat restricted. When Mr. Bracken sitting in a provincial legislature undertakes to do anything about the tariff he is up against a stone wall. That is federal legislation, and beyond his sphere of influence. Now that he has sought a larger field I believe he will prove an asset to the House of Commons and to Canada.

When I heard the rumour that Mr. Bracken was to become leader of the Conservative party, I was amazed; I was astounded. I could not understand why the Conservative party would want him, and I never thought he would accept their views. But, alas, this strange phenomenon has taken place. The Conservative party, under his leadership, has taken the name "Progressive Conservative." Let us hope that progressive principles are also embodied.

Speaking for myself, and following my usual procedure, I shall support any promise of legislation coming from any group in this chamber, if I think such measures will prove beneficial to our nation's welfare.

I would hate to introduce a jarring note into the discussion. My position on certain questions cannot be misunderstood after the years I have served in parliament. I think—I am just making this reference—that the 1942-43 new policy introduced the other day by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. MacKinnon) with regard to wheat is not in the best interests of the Canadian people. Ever since this legislation was brought before the house a few years ago, I have always taken this attitude. I think the policy adopted by the government was faulty, and the regulations announced the other day are the inevitable result of the bad foundation. That is all I want to say to-day with regard to wheat. It may be that I shall have the privilege of speaking further on this matter. I am glad to have had this opportunity of speaking and I thank you, sir, for listening.

Mr. A. H. BENICE (Saskatoon City): Mr. Speaker, may I, at the outset of my remarks, endorse most emphatically the words of the immediately preceding speaker with respect to old age pensions. I am sure that any hon. members who know anything at all about the

[Mr. Leader.]

situation that exists across Canada to-day in connection with housing conditions and the difficulty of obtaining food must agree that it is impossible for any man or woman to maintain a reasonably decent standard of living on \$20 a month. In most cities it is impossible to obtain a room for \$20 a month, let alone purchase food and clothing and the other necessities of life.

The other day the leader of the opposition (Mr. Graydon) referred to the matter of more attention being paid to a man's occupation when members of the cabinet were being selected. I agree most heartily with his expressions. Without casting any reflection upon those who are members of my profession, I think more attention should be given to representatives of the two largest bodies in the dominion, labour and agriculture. I have, however, what I believe is a more serious criticism to make with respect to the actions of the administration in the selection of boards which deal with matters pertinent to the whole dominion. The administration has, in my opinion, been most short-sighted in the selection of the membership of many of these boards from the geographical point of view. It seems to me that an examination of some of the most important boards will show that the administration has completely forgotten that there is any other part of Canada than that in the immediate centre. Again I am casting no reflection upon this particular part of the country. I suggest most sincerely and emphatically that unless the viewpoint of all the people of this country is obtained with respect to problems which affect the whole country, we cannot expect to obtain the efficient war effort which we should have at this time.

One of the most serious problems before the Canadian people to-day is the matter of man-power. No one will deny that, and there is no part of Canada more concerned about it than the part from which I come. Agricultural workers are very scarce and farmers are having the greatest difficulty in taking off their crops. In many instances farmers have not been able to take their crops off at all. Yet when it came to the selection of the board which was most concerned with this problem of labour we find—I refer to *Hansard* of May 20 of last year where an answer is given to a question asked by myself—that the members of the national selective service advisory board, which is described as being composed of the members of the national war labour board and the interdepartmental committee on labour coordination, is made up of eight members from the province of Quebec,