

critical times Canada has ever gone through, and I say in the interests of agriculture, of the small manufacturer, of the small business man, of Canada itself, we must have a lowering of interest rates in this dominion. I say that with all sincerity. I say it as a farmer. I have no apology to make for any votes I have given in favour of the national fiscal policy of protection, but I do believe in a quid pro quo for agriculture. The great distance between Canada's agricultural producers and their markets is a further handicap to them, whereas the manufacturer in Canada is protected by that very handicap of distance from his competitor. The manufacturer is protected by tariffs which preserve his market for him but the farmers cannot be protected in their markets when they have an exportable surplus. Therefore we must get that quid pro quo by any reasonable means in order to make our whole social organization more successful. I say that I believe the lowering of interest will help a great deal in this terrible financial crisis through which we are passing. I do not think there is an hon. member but will agree that I am not pleading needlessly for agriculture, when you consider that last year we were selling the products of our soil for 44.9 per cent of what we sold them for in 1926, while the manufacturer if he was selling anything was selling his products at from 72 to 96 per cent of 1926 prices.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I am inclined to have less confidence in my argument by reason of the applause I hear from the opposite side.

An hon. MEMBER: Come over here.

Mr. ROWE: If what I said in the former part of my speech met with the same agreement, my hon. friends would come over here. I will say further with reference to the financial crisis that we have been going through that the brunt of it at the present time is being carried by agriculture, the basis of the prosperity of any country, the distress of which is a main factor in the present depression. But I can see no cure in the proposals of those who want to inflate our currency so that no one will recognize it. As we maintain our national financial institutions, maintain the credit of this country, the soundness of its money, and help to pay the obligations of large industrial corporations that a protective policy has built up, I say our quid pro quo should be such as will help us to maintain our position in the future and bring back prosperity to the farmers of this dominion, to the benefit of everyone in the country.

I congratulate the government on the steps which they have taken. I know there is the soldiers' pension reduction, the sugar tax and other little things that might be criticized but I do not propose to go into them. I wish only to warn my farmer friends on the other side—because there are some of them I would like to see come back—when they are considering this proposition of sugar tax and stabilization fund, not to forget the old saying that it is possible not to see the woods for the trees. While maintaining the financial credit of this dominion, we should not forget the reminder of Goldsmith that:

Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay;

And I would quote his further warning:

An honest peasantry, a nation's pride,  
Once destroyed can never be supplied.

I think that indicates Canada's first obligation at the present time. As a farmer myself I am not ashamed to compare the Canadian cultivator of the soil with the bold peasantry of whom Goldsmith wrote. On the other hand, I can say that there are many farmers in this dominion from whom you have not heard. We have had petitions presented by those in the far corner from 6,000 farmers, but we know there are 720,000 more who have not been heard from. We know there have been a few stampedes started and brought to the parliament buildings to embarrass this government by trained agricultural politicians, but most of the farmers of Canada do not require organizations signified by several letters of the alphabet to describe where they stand. The farming class in Canada are still the stable class in Canadian citizenship, and they have stood this test with the same fortitude and loyalty as in other times of trouble. The agriculturists form the great mass of Canadian citizenship, they constitute almost fifty per cent of the population and probably another thirty per cent are intimately dependent upon them. They will maintain sound Canadian citizenship, they will preserve the institutions and form of government that we have enjoyed in the past, and I say to all those interested in good government and who cherish the institutions we have inherited that they need not fear that the rural part of our population will be carried away by these alphabetical new proposals. They are not concerned about sending to parliament members who have searched the alphabet for descriptive letters; these will be sent back home and will never be heard of again while Canadian agriculture marches on into a brighter and more prosperous future.