

The Address—Mr. Bater

The time is ripe for something to be done in northwestern Saskatchewan in this connection. The point I have in mind is North Battleford. This memorandum touches on that, but I will not take up the time to go into all the details.

Again this fall western agriculture suffered a severe blow. We had a good crop. We grew a crop, but because of a large amount of rain and snow we were not able to harvest it. Many farmers have the bulk of their crops under the snow yet, and perhaps it will be there until next spring. This calamity struck not only the grain grower in western Canada but also the farmers who are active in diversified farming. I mean those engaged in mixed farming. The weather caught many of them with their cattle feed out under the snow. Because of that they were not able to turn their cattle out on the stubble as in normal times, and consequently they have had to dispose of a considerable number of their cattle.

Speaking of cattle, I should like to concur in what the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Harrison) had to say about cattle. I was surprised to hear one hon. member suggest that one of the things that he thought should be done to ease inflation in our country was to prohibit the exportation of cattle to the United States. In that connection I should like to quote something that I quoted before coming in this house. To him I would say this:

We should abandon the fallacy which teaches that we can become prosperous by limiting production and restricting trade, because political co-operation and economic isolation cannot exist side by side.

This does not involve some new and untried scheme of social relationship or fantastic economic theory; it is simply the removal of those artificial barriers between men and nations that have been at the root of all our international differences, and the restoration, to all the people, of that most valuable privilege of organized society—the right to trade freely with one another. Freedom of trade and intercourse between men and nations go hand in hand with understanding and goodwill, and provides the only way in which all can be assured that equality of opportunity that should be the inherent right of citizenship.

With respect to those out west who have been caught with their crops under the snow, I hope and urge that the government do something to relieve the situation. It can be truly said that the farmers of the western provinces are possibly the most vulnerable primary producers in the Dominion of Canada. Not only are we vulnerable so far as weather conditions are concerned, but we are also vulnerable in our markets. To any who would suggest the restricting of markets I would say that the very life blood of the economy of our country is derived from the land, forests, mines and the sea.

That is the very life blood of our economy, and the arteries that carry that life blood are our markets. I am pleased to see that something is to be done about freight rates. A committee is being set up. We all hope that something will come out of that committee's work.

I am concerned about our young men and our returned soldiers who might desire to go back on the land. Out in Saskatchewan we are suffering from a diminishing population. I think I have an idea whereby that might be checked, and perhaps put into reverse. To our federal and to all governments across the country I say this: If they own or control any improved lands of any kind, be they fruit farms, grain farms or any other kinds of farms, give our young boys and our returned men an opportunity to purchase these farms. Do not rent them or lease them, but let them purchase them. I contend, Mr. Speaker, that with ownership goes greater responsibility, greater interest and greater stability.

I enjoyed listening to the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Ferrie) when he was speaking about the lands in the far north and also the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Murray). They both spoke a great deal about the lands that are left in our last great northwest. In connection with those lands I would like to turn back the pages of our history a few years and suggest that we go back to the old homestead days, Mr. Speaker. By that I do not mean that we should go back to the oxen and to the walking plow with which many started their homesteads. I would suggest that the lands that are still left in the northern areas owned by any government be thrown open to our young men and our returned soldiers for homesteading. I would suggest that a little larger fee be charged today. It used to be \$10 and we got 160 acres. Perhaps today the fee might be increased to \$25. I suggest that they be given a section of this land. Under the old rules and regulations they were given three years to comply with certain residence qualifications and so forth. In that time they had the privilege of proving up and getting title to their land. I contend that something of that kind should be done with the lands that are still left in the northwest about which we have heard so much from the hon. members that I have mentioned.

I should like to concur in what the hon. member for Mackenzie had to say about the evergreen highway from Winnipeg to Edmonton. I have spoken on this before, and I just wish to reiterate what I have said previously. I would urge the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton) and the Minister of Resources