

Agricultural Conditions

Speaker, to violate the rules of parliament by reading from a former debate, I will do so. I did put the book back on the desk because I knew that in reading the extract I would be proceeding contrary to the rules of the house. However, if I may be allowed by hon. members opposite I will read from Hansard as follows:

It ill becomes hon. gentlemen here, who know of an isolated case here and another there, to draw a general conclusion in respect to conditions in western Canada. I can say that in western Canada there are tens of thousands of farmers who have deposits of money in the banks. It is true that there has been great hardship encountered by many farmers, for two reasons. The first reason is because of crop failure, and the second reason is because of low prices for the crops they did produce. The hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Gardiner) himself lost his crop

That particular section is not the right one—

Mr. MANION: The hon. member has chosen the wrong page.

An hon. MEMBER: Be careful.

Mr. VALLANCE: Order.

Mr. BROWN: I do not purpose to be howled down in that way. I am going to repeat the statement that if the Prime Minister did not say there was no depression in western Canada he unduly minimized it.

An hon. MEMBER: He did not say it.

Mr. BROWN: To continue with the extract from the Canadian Press despatch from Saskatoon:

During the past winter, says U.F.C. statement, clothing has been sent out by the red cross to 2,600 families; by the United Farmers of Canada to 670 families, and by the Wheat Pool to 350 families.

In addition the U.F.C. has on file applications for relief from over 100 families. Relief operations, it is pointed out, have also been carried on by the press of the province, the Salvation army, the Canadian Legion, the churches, the Jewish community and by other organizations.

"Since last fall about 500 members of the U.F.C. have appealed to the legal adviser of the association for assistance in their financial difficulties. Retail stores and business organizations in Saskatoon are experiencing the greatest difficulty in carrying on business and are making drastic reductions in staffs."

"These are facts," says the statement, "and facts will not give place to statements even though made by prime ministers."

In reply to Mr. Bennett's remark that tens of thousands of farmers have substantial bank accounts, it is pointed out that farmers are losing money on every bushel of wheat they grow and in these circumstances the bank balances are not likely to last very long. Many of the bank balances, it is urged, are from sources other than agriculture.

[Mr. Brown.]

"Mr. Bennett states," says the U.F.C., "that \$300,000,000 are invested in automobiles and tractors, and that this bespeaks the solvency and economic well-being of the people of the west. Even farmers must have some means of getting about the country and must have some means of carrying on work," continued the statement.

"Has Mr. Bennett considered how much time would be lost in the summer time if farmers were to depend on the antiquated buggy? Has he considered that if they did not possess tractors they would at least have to keep large teams of horses to do the necessary work? And, by the way, economists have not yet been able to advise us which method is the most economical. Again, it would be pertinent to ask why Mr. Bennett omitted to state how many millions of dollars are owing on these automobiles and tractors. Farmers may have been, in many cases, injudicious in incurring the expense associated with these machines, but we have got to deal with conditions as they exist."

I think it would have been more to the point—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member but I must remind him that it is against rule 306 to read in debate extracts from newspapers on the remarks of any other hon. member in the house.

Mr. BROWN: That is an interpretation of the rule which I do not think has been followed.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The rule is very plain.

Mr. BROWN: It has not been followed before in this house.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I have never heard it followed.

Mr. BROWN: It may have been ruled upon by you, sir.

Mr. GARDINER: Will Mr. Speaker quote the rule?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rule 306.

Mr. GARDINER: But that is not a rule.

Mr. RINFRET: Is it a rule or a comment?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has been held by previous Speakers, my hon. friend knows that.

Mr. RINFRET: If my hon. friend from Lisgar will allow me, I should like to point out to Mr. Speaker—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. member rise to a point of order?