

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): At my interview with them in January I was informed to the contrary. Will the minister say that he has received no communication from the Minister of Agriculture or the Premier of Alberta during this winter asking for the application of one hundred per cent federal relief to certain areas in the province of Alberta?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): There have been no requests such as that so far as I am aware.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I have been informed that such requests have been sent in to the minister, but I unhesitatingly accept his word. I shall ascertain from the provincial government at the first opportunity their position in respect thereto. But on my own behalf I urge now on the administration, from my knowledge of the conditions that exist in the southern half of my own riding, in a large portion of the riding of my hon. friend from Acadia (Mr. Gardiner), and in the riding of my hon. friend from Medicine Hat (Mr. Gershaw), that exactly the same terms of relief be extended to us, because certain municipalities are utterly unable to finance their share of the crop requirements.

I will give to the minister one or two statements in that regard. Perhaps one will be ample. I received this statement from the municipality of Blackfoot, No. 218, in a letter dated February 25:

The finances of this municipal district are in poor condition on account of uncollected taxes, and whereas the conditions are such that it has become impossible for the taxpayer to pay higher taxes, therefore be it resolved that this municipality can give no financial assistance to the financing of seed grain and feed this coming spring.

Certified copy of resolution passed by the council of the municipal district of Blackfoot, No. 218.

I have received a very great number of statements describing conditions not exactly in the same language but very similar, from almost every part of my riding. They have suffered three successive years from crop failures. In each of those years the prices were so low that the receipts were not equal to the costs of production. A letter from one of the districts in question might be in order:

The conditions in the Hussar and Chancellor districts are very bad. At a recent meeting of the Hussar U.F.A. local attended by 40 farmers, only seven—

Remember, only seven.

—had their seed for this year.

The farmers of this district who have had no crop for three years fully expected the

federal government to grant us a measure of relief, even if it was only enough to get our seed and feed or fuel for the tractors, as no one has any credit; in fact the bank has been closed up.

There is some talk of just letting the land ready for crop go unseeded.

My hon. friend from Yorkton (Mr. McPhee) quoted prices. I think in our district we could surpass the horrible state of price levels he described. Eggs are selling at 12 to 16 cents per dozen, butter at 15 cents per pound, the best cattle at 4 cents per pound and poultry at 6 or 7 cents per pound. Letter after letter brings stories of that kind to my desk. The government is well conversant with the recent crash in the live stock market which has rendered very pitiful the state of many of our people in the west. One of them states that since July 31, nearly 100 rural telephones have been withdrawn from operation in the Vulcan district. That is merely an indication of conditions. The letter from Vulcan states:

I believe there are not many who have paid their taxes in the past two years.

Another letter states:

Most everyone is on relief or trying to get there. Several farmers had to move their stock out of the district last fall.

Through lack of feed. Another letter states:

From what I can gather, practically no one has paid taxes.

Another:

Practically everything else has been sacrificed to make possible clothing ourselves and eating. Even then a great deal of Red Cross aid has been necessary. Many are without seed, and for those who have to buy it Mr. Bennett's bonus has worked an additional hardship.

From Wayne I received the following:

I personally have farmed for forty years and have not seen anything like compared to that we are going through now. The banks refuse to assist. I only see one way out of it, and that is the farmers will have to quit.

Just as an example: I met a man yesterday and talked over the matter and he told me that he would not be able to treat his grain with formaldehyde because he did not have any cash to buy it.

From Rosebud comes the following:

I know of two cases, one a neighbor with five children who are trying to live on the proceeds of a three-gallon can of cream a week probably worth \$1.30. The other has nothing; I do not know how he exists. Everyone is up against it; I do not see how they can get their crop in. You hear on every side, "If I had my debts paid I would get out of here." In this district we were able to dig coal or else there would have been terrible suffering. The people are desperate in their feelings. They seem to see no hope ahead.