

## PRIVILEGE—Mr. BENNETT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Before the orders of the day are called, Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege arising out of the debates yesterday. I think from the record it is possible the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) was confusing the report of the Associated Press as to certain matters in connection with wheat pools in Canada with the report from other sources. He observed that some Tory newspaper was responsible for the propaganda, and that he had been informed by the High Commissioner's office that a sensational despatch had appeared in the London Times sent by its correspondent here. I took the trouble this morning to go through the recent numbers of the London Times and I find that the statement in question appears on page 13 of the issue of Friday, February 7, 1930. In reasonably small type appear the words:

Canadian Wheat Pools

A Grave Situation

(From Our Own Correspondent)

Ottawa, February 6,

The second paragraph reads:

The Toronto Star, yesterday, under the heading "Financial catastrophe confronts Dominion if wheat sale forced,"

And so on. I took the trouble to get the Star for February 5, and it contains the statement quoted:

Financial catastrophe confronts Dominion if wheat sale forced.

On the following day the Toronto Star printed in large type these words:

Grain prices drop despite guarantee.

I think there has been misapprehension on the part of the right hon. Prime Minister as to where the despatch came from. What appeared in the London Times was an accurate statement of what was printed in the Toronto Star of the preceding day.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is quite right in stating that the article to which I had reference is the one which he has just read. An article appeared in the Toronto Star about a financial catastrophe confronting the Dominion. As I said last night, any one in Canada who understood the situation would have known that that was a sensational article as it appeared in the Toronto Star, and would not in the circumstances have cabled it to England. But it was cabled to the London Times by its correspondent in Canada and was published in

[Mr. Church.]

the Times, as my hon. friend has just indicated to the house. When the article appeared in the London Times I received from the High Commissioner's office in England a communication stating that there was considerable concern in London as a consequence of the article which had appeared in the London Times and asking that as speedily as possible some word be sent which would be reassuring to the British public with respect to any financial situation that had arisen in Canada through the efforts of the pool to market the grain. If I remember correctly—I am speaking from memory at the moment—that communication came on a Saturday morning, and before the day was far advanced I had prepared and sent to the High Commissioner's office a communication indicating that the article quoted was simply a despatch that had appeared in one of the Canadian papers, that it was without any real foundation and that there was no occasion for any fear as to the financial situation with respect to the marketing of grain, and in Monday's papers in England the erroneous impression which had been created by this despatch was corrected.

Mr. BENNETT: It was in Tuesday's Times; I have it before me.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is so.

Mr. BENNETT: The question of privilege to which I desired to direct attention was in reference to the remark that the article had appeared in a Tory paper.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I question whether this is at all a matter of privilege, but if my hon. friend looks at my remarks he will see that the reference to what appeared in the London Times has no relation to my remarks about a Tory paper. My remark about the Tory paper had reference to what appeared with respect to placards which were supposed to be distributed by some bakery or restaurant establishment in England.

Mr. BENNETT: And it did not appear in the Times.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No, that has nothing to do with the Times. However, if I might be afforded the same measure of privilege as my hon. friend I might continue to enlighten him on the subject to which he referred. I have now here the communication which came from the High Commissioner's office with respect to the despatch and I might give it to the house exactly as received, because I think it is a matter of public interest. The High Commissioner's office sent the following despatch under date of February 7: