

There is no doubt the long years of war complicated the problem and delayed the realization of many projects perfectly practicable and promising which the Government intends to carry out. The limitations and restrictions imposed by war conditions have had their effect, but they have not proved insurmountable and the good work is going on. A policy broad and safe in its essential features has been established and in a short time will be vindicated. Vexatious details are being eliminated, practical experience is teaching much, both to the Administration and to those who are sharing the benefits of this policy. It is not a time to cry a halt or to try to cripple any movement which will send the right sort of people back to the land. Nor must a few incomplete and perhaps unsatisfactory adventures be held as evidence of the prospective failure of so great and lasting an undertaking.

These matters are not within the purview of my own departments, but I happen to know that experienced agriculturists, statesmen, specialists, financiers, and other men of affairs who are deeply interested in just such questions as these have made a careful investigation of the Government's method of meeting these conditions, and all are unstinted in their commendation of the broad policy adopted. I prefer the confidence and approval of such men to the cavilling and carping criticisms of one of the twin heads of a former Government which neglected these important matters far too long.

I take it that the following references were made in connection with the general criticism of the record of the Government, and particularly of Premier Oliver, in connection with the Pacific Great Eastern Railway settlement made by Mr. Bowser at that time. I find that Mr. Bowser indulged in a number of extravagant and wholly groundless statements in the course of his speech here.

At one place he referred to "7½ per centum forced accounts" going to Mackenzie & Mann. That the Premier once had characterized these men as the biggest rogues running at large, but as soon as the Government took over the management of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway the first thing done was to let a contract for its completion to these men. I find also that Mr. Bowser objected to the Government talk of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway as a "legacy," and his statement that, had the Government not set aside the contracts with Foley, Welch & Stewart, but had forced this firm to carry them out, the railway would be in operation now. In this connection Mr. Bowser said that, in spite of all the Liberal shouting, Honest John will not permit an investigation of Pacific Great Eastern Railway matters.

I wish to deal with this tissue of false witness and misrepresentation in the serious manner it calls for. A frank setting forth of the salient facts connected with this matter will show how unscrupulous Mr. Bowser shows himself to be and to what wholly abhorrent lengths he carries his misrepresentations.

I shall take up now Mr. Bowser's statement that the Premier will not permit an investigation of Pacific Great Eastern administration. This assertion is not only wholly without foundation, but is in direct contra-