

are getting for our wheat in this country. In Italy, by the expenditure of very great sums of money, they are prepared to make it possible to produce within their own land all the wheat that they are prepared to feed to their people. They are prepared in France to do exactly the same thing. Why? It is not because of anything that is happening in this country, but because of a lack of confidence and a lack of understanding in existence among the peoples in the countries of Europe at the present time.

That has always been the reason for world depressions. There never has been a world depression develop for any other reason, and those world depressions will never cease to exist until that fear of war has passed into history. At that time they will cease to exist and we shall have better times. If they cease to exist now we shall have better times.

But that does not relieve this parliament, or the members of parliament, from trying to grapple with the problem which that world situation has created. This government, let me point out, has been grappling with the problem. The problem in western Canada, associated with the fact that we broke up land which should not have been broken up, was first grappled with by Mr. Bennett's government in 1935, when they set up operations under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. We have enlarged upon those activities as to both the extent of their operation, and the time during which they will operate. We have associated the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act with a long-term program in the western part of Canada to reestablish those lands which, in a time of war, were placed under cultivation, and which must be got back to grass.

We are spending about \$4,000,000 a year on that undertaking. But that \$4,000,000 is not spent upon wheat. It is spent to get the farmers back to operating those lands in a way which will make it possible for homes to be built as a result of their operations. We are trying to get farmers to operate those lands in a way which will bring about conditions whereby the lands will not be blowing round, but where live stock may be raised upon them, and where grain necessary to the feeding of that live stock may be produced.

In addition to that, we have been trying to reestablish those areas in another way. We have entered into arrangements with the provincial governments and with the municipalities in the west, under which a considerable part of the debt which had been incurred as a result of the activities of those years was wiped off. There was brought before the house only a few days ago a piece of legislation through

which it is intended to continue activities in that direction, in the hope that some assistance may be brought to those who incurred unnecessary obligations during the period of our difficulties.

But we did not stop there—neither the previous government nor this one. In 1931, when we had our first great crop failure of this period, the previous government set up a method of dealing with the wheat area in western Canada. I want to say this, that I have no criticism to make of the Conservative party of that day. I have no criticism to make of the Progressive party of that day, or of the United Farmers of Alberta. I have no criticism to make of the Liberal party of that day. May I point out that it was the first experience this country had ever had with the payment of a bonus. They decided to pay that bonus in the months of May and June of 1931.

Mr. MANION: Was it not 1932?

Mr. GARDINER: No, I believe it was 1931. That bonus was set at five cents a bushel. Everybody now realizes that it was not a wise thing to do in that particular year. Why? Because in the spring of that particular year there was a fine looking crop, as there usually is in the western part of Canada in May and the early part of June. There was a fine looking crop over all the area, but the price was poor. They said that because the price was poor they were going to try to help the farmer by giving him a bonus of five cents a bushel. In the latter part of June and the early part of July every farmer in western Canada knew that in over half of that area there was little if any crop, while in one-third of the area there was no crop at all. I understand that the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Perley), along with a representative of the provincial legislature, Mr. Fraser of Oxbow, and Mr. J. J. McGurran, secretary of the municipal association of Saskatchewan, came to Ottawa and interviewed the prime minister of that time. They suggested that an acreage bonus plan should be substituted for the five cent bonus which had been provided by the legislation of that session. However, the government was unable to provide for that plan because the bonus legislation had been provided for during the time the house was in session.

That bonus had to be paid all across the northern part of the three western provinces, and it cost this country thirteen million and some odd thousand dollars. There was an area in the southern part of Saskatchewan, in part of Manitoba and in a small part of