

manently done away with. I am sure that there will come a time when no longer millions of men who are anxious to obtain work will be unable to find it; and this is an end towards which, I submit, the Government not only of Canada but of every civilized country should strive.

With the permission of the House I should like to read a short extract from a speech made by Governor La Follette, of Wisconsin. In his inaugural address he said:

As a state and nation we have astonished the world—how to produce the necessities and luxuries of life in sufficient quantities to supply the needs of all our people—but in the midst of abundance we have want and suffering. Unless we can solve this problem of the distribution of abundance, unless we can stop hunger and hardship in all of this plenty, we shall be actors in the greatest tragedy of history.

I should like to read also a statement that was made by the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen in the course of an address at Washington:

The world is not well organized for the purpose of distributing amongst the population the fruits of their toil by brain and hand, in accordance with the contribution of each.

I think the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen struck the nail squarely on the head when he said that the present economic system falls short in distributing the world's wealth to those who earn it. I have great admiration for Mr. Meighen's ability and I wish that it could be put at the service of the country just now. Mr. Henry Wise Wood, of Alberta, in a speech at the convention of the United Farmers of Alberta, at Calgary, made a statement similar to that of Mr. Meighen. There is a great difference between Washington and Calgary and between Hon. Mr. Meighen and Mr. Wood; but they are both men of great ability, and because of the thought that they have given to public affairs their opinions carry weight all over this country.

We often hear it said that all the people of the world are neighbours, and that the means of communication have been improved to such an extent that distance has almost been eliminated; that we in Canada to-day are as close to Great Britain as the people of one village in England were to those of another perhaps one hundred years ago. But do people really believe that? Do the actions of governments indicate a belief in that? On the contrary, is not every nation striving to erect higher tariff barriers all the time and to make more difficult the means of communication with other nations? Trade commissioners are sent all over the world for the purpose of increasing international commerce, while the governments in the various countries are all

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the time making the trade barriers more difficult to overcome. Perhaps I shall not live to see it, but the day will surely come when the interchange of commodities between nations will be free and unrestricted. When that time does come the nations will be blessed. I know that this is not practical politics at present, but in the meantime we must realize that we cannot achieve true prosperity by building trade barriers higher and higher.

However, I rose to speak not so much along these lines as in regard to Western conditions, about which I am perhaps as well informed as any other honourable member in this House. I happened to meet a gentleman who is prominently known in Canada, but is not a member of Parliament, and he asked me: "Who is right, the farmer, or Mr. Beatty, or Mr. Black of the milling interests, as to conditions in the West?" Who is right? Well, if you ask the farmers they tell you one story, and if you ask Mr. Beatty you get another. I have a great admiration for Mr. Beatty, both as a private gentleman and as president of a great railway, and I have no doubt that he believes in the psychological effect of telling the people that they are not so badly off as they think they are. However, that is not a great deal of encouragement to the person who is struggling under difficult conditions. I want to state in plain English that the farmers in Western Canada to-day are in financial difficulties, and I do not see why the fact should be disputed, or why it should not be brought out. The conditions existing in the West are the worst that I have seen in my forty-nine years of experience in that country. We have had difficult times; we have had crop failures; personally I have had disappointments of all sorts that come to people engaged in agriculture; but there is something in the present condition that has never existed before, and that is a want of confidence in the future.

The average price of wheat in 1930 was 92 cents per bushel. What will the average price be for 1931? Is anyone bold enough to say that it will be over 60 cents a bushel? In just what respect is the situation of the farmer going to improve within the next twelve months? I do not believe that any improvement in agricultural conditions in Western Canada is possible in less than one or two years, or perhaps a longer period.

Just to make this point clear, I might mention a few figures. In 1927-28 1,000 bushels of wheat would liquidate a farmer's liability to the extent of \$1,200; to-day it takes 3,000 bushels of wheat to do exactly the same thing. The prices of farm products have