

*The Address—Mr. Fair*

industry evaded the policy of free production and low prices during the great depression. Herewith is the table:

1919-1933

	Drop in Prices Per cent	Drop in Produc- tion Per cent
Agricultural implements .....	6	80
Motor vehicles .....	16	80
Cement .....	18	65
Iron and steel products .....	20	83
Tires .....	33	70
Textiles .....	45	30
Food products .....	49	14
Leather .....	50	20
Petroleum .....	56	20
Agricultural commodities .....	63	6

Had weather and other conditions been favourable I presume there would have been no drop whatever in production. Farmers are not in the same position as others to regulate their production because it depends upon the Almighty whether they get a good or a poor crop. Good management and things of that kind do not have everything to do with it.

Before I forget I want to express my feelings toward those individuals and organizations which continuously snipe at the wheat board. I believe the wheat board is the best set-up we have ever had, particularly under conditions such as those we are facing at the present time, for the marketing of our grain. The chief commissioner of the board, Mr. McIvor, in my opinion has done an excellent job for a number of years. As far as I have been able to discover, and I have been keeping close tab on the board ever since it was set up, he and his assistants are all doing an excellent job.

The good work they have done and the heavy yields the farmers have harvested during the past four years have been responsible for the farmers favourable financial position today. When I say that I do not mean that all farmers are out of debt. That is not the case by any means. When we were considering the Farm Improvement Loans Act last year we were told that more than \$98 million of loans on a short-term basis had been made. That will show that things are not as they ought to be with the farmer. The exorbitant prices which they have to pay for everything they buy in connection with their production is responsible to a large extent for the position in which they find themselves today.

When we consider that while more than 20 per cent of the people of Canada are on the land and they receive only about 10 per cent of the national income, we should realize that it is about time those in control of policy did something to see that more of our people remain on the land. If we look back to about

1920 we find that about 33 per cent of our population were on the land at that time. Why should 12 or 13 per cent of our people have left the land?

Are the people on the land as well off as the people in the city? Do they have an eight-hour day and a five-day forty-hour week? Do they have pensions at the end of the road? Do they have guaranteed holidays? No, they do not have any of these things. I have been actively engaged on the land for 33 years and I know quite well the hardships a farmer has to put up with. The welfare of the farmer should be of as much interest to industry and labour as it is to the farmer himself, because upon the prosperity of the farmer depends the prosperity and well-being of labour, whether it be organized or unorganized, and industry. Our farm population provides a potential market for the products of industry.

Much has been said about the great wheat crops we have had. I think they are a real blessing. No government, not even a Liberal government, can claim credit for them. As I said a few minutes ago, these good things have been provided by the Almighty and without His aid we would not have had these crops. We should first of all see to it that our own people in Canada have all the bread they can eat. If they have not the price it is our job to see that they get it.

We have been told time and time again that millions of people overseas go hungry to bed every night. Only a few weeks ago I read that the government proposes to send vast quantities of war materials to other countries by way of aid. I suggest that some of our surplus wheat be sent instead of these other articles. When I make that suggestion I want to say also, do not send it at the expense of the farmer.

We must remember that today the farmer is receiving on the basis of the 1939 dollar little better than 70 cents per bushel for his wheat, when you take into consideration the costs of the things he has to buy which is considerably over 200 today as compared with 100 in 1939. This brings us back to the dirty depression days of the thirties which were inflicted upon this country by those who were managing our affairs at that time. I say shame to anybody or to any government that will permit such conditions to exist.

We are told that other countries are not able to provide the dollars to purchase what we have to sell. I would refer again to the Bretton Woods agreement and point out that that agreement is responsible for much of the lack of dollars that exists. These countries

[Mr. Fair.]