

the farmers out of such a tax, or are they going to compensate them at all? If they do not compensate them, then they are confiscating; it is either compensation or confiscation. Confiscation of the products of a man's labour is the last word that should be suggested to those who are struggling with conditions as they are in this country to-day. I should like to know from the Prime Minister when he rises to speak—I think the farmers of this country want to know—whether he is going to compensate the farmer and, if not, how he can justify the policy he is proposing.

May I ask this further question which I consider is pertinent? What has been the justification for the great agencies of transportation and communication which we have in this country, for the moneys which have been spent upon railways, canals and other facilities for transportation and distribution, if it has not been to make possible in very large measure the export of this one particular commodity above all others? At this very moment this country is committed by the government to a St. Lawrence waterways treaty. Why are we going to be put to the expense of developing a great waterway to permit ocean liners to come from the sea to the head of the lakes when the policy of the government is to cut down the area of production of the very commodity which above all we want to export? May I draw attention to this circumstance: At the present time the members of congress in the United States are debating the merits of this agreement. They are to have the opportunity of deciding the question in the light of all the conditions set forth in the agreement. They will be able to carry on their discussions quite freely and in the knowledge of how this agreement will serve their ends at the present time. If the agreement is not acceded to, no one will suffer politically so far as that aspect of things is concerned. The administration will still retain office, meanwhile members of congress are free to debate the question and to have its merits fully disclosed. Has this House of Commons been given any opportunity to discuss this agreement? Will it be given any chance to discuss its provisions except upon the basis that the fate of the ministry is bound up with the acceptance of an agreement which it has already signed? Since the present government came into office there has been no discussion of the waterways question in this House of Commons. The government signed the agreement without presenting even a resolution to parliament along lines which might

have furnished the basis of a treaty. After the agreement has been signed—we will be bound by it in the event of the United States agreeing to it—the strongest argument of all for the deep waterways will have been taken away, by the new policy on agriculture which hon. gentlemen opposite are putting into force, a policy of restriction rather than encouragement of production.

I venture to say that, so far as western Canada is concerned, there will not be much approval of this wheat agreement. May I point out the manner in which my right hon. friend proposes to have the agreement carried out? If I were to state to the house what has actually taken place and to show the means by which it is proposed a great measure of this kind is to be carried out, I think I would be laughed out of the house. I wish, therefore, to put on record exactly what has appeared thus far in the press as to what the government purposes to do with respect to the carrying out of the wheat agreement. I quote from the Ottawa Citizen of January 20, as follows:

Immediate steps towards fulfilment of Canada's obligation to reduce wheat acreage under the world wheat agreement were agreed upon at a conference between Premier R. B. Bennett and the premiers of the three prairie provinces last night.

The meeting was held just after the close of the dominion-provincial conference and questions of wheat acreage were thoroughly discussed.

In the next few weeks the wheat-growing provinces will supply the dominion government with estimates of the acreage likely to be sown to wheat next spring and also an estimate of the amount of damage likely to be caused by grasshoppers.

During the winter the governments will carry on propaganda among wheat farmers to induce them to cut down their wheat production.

On its part the dominion government, when it gets the estimates, will draw up legislation to meet the problem and submit it to the provinces for approval.

Owing to low prices and lack of machinery on the part of hard-pressed farmers it is expected somewhat less wheat would be sown on the prairies this year in any case. By means of a propaganda campaign it is hoped to induce the farmers to make a further curtailment voluntarily.

The propaganda will likely stress the advantage of a higher price and the possibility of attaining it through a slight reduction in production.

Under the world wheat agreement concluded last summer at the time of the world economic conference in London, Canada agreed to reduce acreage by 15 per cent.

What is to be done? This government proposes to get from the provincial governments estimates with respect to the extent of the acreage likely to be sown and the extent to which grasshoppers are likely to operate in the course of the next year. Well, that may