

*Supply—Agriculture*

the United States and determines what areas are suitable for agriculture, he must conclude that those areas on the face of the map of Canada are pitifully small in relation to world development of the future and to the production of foodstuffs for people throughout the world, to which Canada can make so great a contribution.

Therefore those of us out in those areas feel that if you will just bear with us and continue assistance to us over a period of years—and it will not be too long—it will turn out all right. After all, it has been only ten years, and there have been many countries on the North American continent which have suffered for more years than that before they became self-sustaining. We believe that if you will bear with us we will make ourselves self-sustaining, and make as great a contribution to the future welfare of Canada as will any other area of this country.

For a few moments I shall refer to crop failure, to which reference has been made today. In that connection we would suggest that consideration be given to continued assistance for another short period of time, until we can make ourselves self-sustaining. We should have the advantage of P.F.A.A. assistance to make our conditions livable, and make it tolerable for the people in this country, who have suffered through these long years in trying to make their contribution to Canada. We should make it possible for those people to realise their ambitions, to stay in that area and build their homes.

Some of us will move, because that is a country of vast extent. The constituency of Maple Creek has, I believe, 265 polls in it. It extends about 180 miles along the Montana border, and about 80 miles along the Alberta border. People will be moving out of that area in sufficient numbers when the incentive is provided for them, or when they have better possibilities to earn a living elsewhere.

As we know, the dominion government has no land available on which they can settle. It might not be agreeable to the other provinces to move these people to irrigated land in other provinces. I think it is the intention of the government—certainly I hope it is—to make it possible for those people to obtain land the government will have in irrigated areas, and in whatever province they may be, so that when they have to move they will move to a place not under the same conditions, thus they would have a better prospect of making a living.

In the meantime those people are there. I am one who believes that to make that area productive we have to increase the methods we have been following. Farmers must have more land in arid areas than they need in

those parts of the country where they have an annual rainfall of from twenty to thirty inches. There may be some people willing to move to those irrigated areas which are provided. Then we will follow a system of double summer-fallowing of our land and summer fallowing of our water and summer fallowing of grass. We have to summer-fallow our water out in the west. You will build a dam through P.F.R.A. which will hold the spring runoff, and so that you may have sufficient water to irrigate. Last spring there was very little runoff, so that we have had to build other dams to hold two years' supply, so that in a dry year we will have sufficient water to irrigate the land.

If we get moisture we will make a contribution to this country—and I hope in the not distant future. We will not be standing here asking for assistance for the dried-out areas of Saskatchewan in the Maple Creek area.

Meantime, farmers have been getting along with prairie farm assistance. It was never intended from any other motive or for any other reason than to keep the people off relief, as was pointed out this afternoon by the Minister of Agriculture. However, in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan the dominion government is the senior government, and the one responsible for a greater share in the interests of those people. Some think that the payments to farmers under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act should be increased, and we are repeating that to the government. We believe that, in those townships which have suffered crop failure two years or more consecutively, a supplementary bonus should be paid for the coming year. Owing to the decreased value of the dollar below what it was in 1938, when the act was brought into force, they will be able to pay the same amount at the present time, with the increased amount of the supplementary payment, that was paid when the act was brought into force in 1938.

To illustrate what would be involved: During the ten-year period from 1938 to 1948 there were 1,810 townships in the three western provinces which yielded less than four bushels to the acre. That would be an average of 181 townships for each year for ten years. If these figures are correct, and the same happens in the next ten years, it means that not more than 181 townships in any year in that ten years would come under this program.

So I would ask for consideration by the government in giving assistance to these people during these most difficult times. They are interested in their spring operations. Sometimes people think that, when we speak of townships with five bushels or less on an