

land has been cut 65 per cent during the last two years, that farms that a few years ago were worth \$3,000 are on the market to-day at \$800, and that practically nothing produced on the farm is yielding a profit? Some people tell us that we are not patriotic because we complain of these conditions. But I think the work that we have done in the West during the last two years in carrying on at a loss in order to facilitate the readjustment of business conditions is an example in loyalty to national needs that has not been surpassed by any other business or industry in this Dominion. Needless to say, agriculture cannot be continued in the West under these conditions—conditions which I am not exaggerating in the least. Last year a number of our farmers in the Grand Prairie district and in the Peace River district of my constituency shipped oats to Fort William at a loss. I think the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar) yesterday said something about freight rates taking, in certain cases, half the price of the grain; we have numerous instances in that country where after our farmers have hauled their grain for twenty to twenty-five miles to the railway, loaded it, and shipped it to Fort William for sale, they have had a bill come back for part of the freight. Such instances have happened not only in the northern but in the southern part of my constituency as well.

I think we have been too long taking the position that certain interests must be protected and guaranteed profits while others must be allowed to take the losses. The sooner we get to the position where all the various interests of the country are willing to take profits and losses in something like their equal and just share, the sooner we will get back to prosperity and to happy conditions.

I do not wish hon. members to think that we are antagonistic to these favoured interests; but that does not imply that we are not antagonistic to those things that we believe are inflicting an unnecessary hardship on our people. We have very large settlements of returned soldiers in my constituency. What is their condition? They bought stock a few years ago, which to-day is worth about a third of what they paid for it; the grain they produce will hardly pay freight expenses; and they have been appealing to the provincial Government of Alberta for assistance. We have come to a strange pass when the men

who went overseas to fight for us have now to endure those conditions and pay tribute to large financial interests through the operation of tariffs, guaranteed railway rates and so on. Of course, it may be argued that our national railways have been losing money and require those increased freight rates. But after all, I do not know that rates would need to be so high if we had only to provide interest on the money that actually went into the building of our railways. It is hardly fair that we should be asked to pay freight rates to provide interest on money that was never invested in those railways but which, I fear, was looted during their construction.

Our soldier settlers in the Northwest are pretty much in the same, or in a worse, condition than the soldier settlers that you heard about the other day from my hon. friend the member for Red Deer (Mr. Speakman), and I sincerely hope that the Government is prepared to do something substantial to enable those men to make good, because unless they are helped they are doomed to failure. Of course, if their goods are revalued it will mean that they have received a gift from the Government. In days gone by some returned soldiers refused to accept loans from the Soldiers' Settlement Board, and those men to-day are better off than their fellows who accepted loans. Possibly they will think they have some claim too if you make a gift through revaluation to some of those who did accept loans, but I believe, in view of the fact that they were wise in not accepting soldiers' settlement loans at the time, we ought to treat them the same as those who accepted loans.

I said a little while ago that we in my constituency were not antagonistic to the railways. I think my hon. friend the Minister of the Interior, will bear me out when I say that we are very anxious to have railways, and more railways, in that constituency. But the people demand an outlet to the Pacific coast, to the ports of Prince Rupert and Vancouver, and I hope we will be able to get that outlet and thus, reduce the present long rail haul eastward of two or three thousand miles to a short haul of only six or seven hundred miles to the Pacific coast.

I am glad to see a reference in the Speech from the Throne to the matter of the return to the three Western provinces of their natural resources. I do not think that this question should be mixed