

tions from the Government and other sources. But where they have raised fair crops, men are totally unable to pay their debts, and their credit is exhausted. While they have got something to-day, they are not starving, and they do not have to be given relief. But their financial condition is just as bad as it well can be. For instance, there have been instances where oats—of course, these are extreme instances; you understand that—there have been instances where the carload of oats did not bring enough to pay for the freight, and there have been hundreds, even thousands, of instances where oats have been sold at the railroad after being hauled greater or less distances—some of them forty or fifty miles—that is an extreme case too—at fifty cents, while in many cases they have paid twelve cents for the threshing. There is another point: the farmers themselves have been violently abused for charging so much for threshing. They used to thresh for three, four and five cents per bushel, but they used to hire help at \$1.50 and \$2.50 per day, when they did so. During the last two or three years the farmers have been paying from \$6.00 to \$12.00 a day.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: The Wheat Board would not control coarse grains;

Mr. WOODS: No.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: It would not affect the oat market?

Mr. WOODS: No; but the farmer, when putting in his crop, emphasizes the grain which he thinks is most likely to yield a profit.

Mr. ANDERSON: You made the statement, Mr. Woods, that the western farmers were producing at a loss. Have you any estimate of the loss on the 1921 wheat crop?

Mr. WOODS: I do not know what the average price of wheat has been, but I have heard it stated that they would get absolutely no profit from a less price than \$1.30 per bushel.

Mr. ANDERSON: Is not that based on a certain number of bushels per acre?

Mr. WOODS: It is based on an average. Of course, you have to put your estimates on an average.

Mr. ANDERSON: An average for each year?

Mr. WOODS: The average for the year, perhaps. A better average is an average over a term of years, but where you make an average over a term of years you have to average the cost each year. You will produce one year's crop at one cost and another year's at another cost, and your product rises or falls from year to year. I think the average I mentioned was for the last year.

Mr. FORRESTER: Mr. Woods stated that he had heard that the farmers could obtain absolutely no profit from a less price than \$1.30. Was not that caused by the high price of labour and the expenses incurred in threshing, and so on?

Mr. WOODS: Yes; overhead expenses constitute an important factor at the present time, for while the price of our farm products is down to practically pre-war level, and in some cases below that, all overhead expenses are very much higher, and the only way in which permanent relief can be secured is to bring those overhead expenses down to a level with the price of the product.

Mr. MCKAY: If the Wheat Board is all that you claim it to be, why do you not ask for its re-establishment on a permanent basis?

Mr. WOODS: Well, there are several reasons. There is a great deal of objection everywhere to that method of trading. I am not convinced that it would be a good thing to re-establish it on a permanent basis if there were no objections. Furthermore, a bad Wheat Board would be a bad institution. That is the reason we lay emphasis on the re-establishment of the old Wheat Board including largely the personnel of that board. That was an efficient body, and an efficient Wheat Board is a very satisfactory institution; but I do not think anything could be worse than a Wheat Board that was inefficient and mixed up with politics.

[Mr. H. W. Woods.]