

The honourable senator from Bladworth (Hon. Mr. Johnston) said last session that he thought money was bad for farmers. I do not think that the farmers act any worse when they have money than do any other class of persons. The honourable senator from Medicine Hat (Hon. Mr. Gershaw) said recently in this house that the farmers' cost of operation was up 25 per cent. I think that is a very moderate estimate. I believe the figure is more like something between 200 and 600 per cent. It works out this way: the farmer has to hire two or three men to do the work of one and pay him three times the wages he should get. Honourable senators can figure that out for themselves. And that is not all; just try to hire a man.

As against the position of the farmer let us consider that of the businessman who furnishes the farmer with supplies. Through the years he has been able to get up any time he likes, and he knows that everything he has will sell. He has no real expenses, and he charges whatever his fancy dictates. During this past summer I paid as high as \$2.25 a bag for cement, and I know some others who paid \$3. The merchant did not have to do any selling to get rid of the cement—he kept it hidden, and the fact that he had it was a secret.

May I illustrate the practices of the businessman who claims to be serving the farmer? A certain merchant got in a stock of twelve small engines, similar to the type one would use for pumping water. He displayed the twelve engines, all in a row, and was quite proud of them. A farmer came into his shop and asked about getting an engine. The merchant replied that he had twelve of them and that he could supply him. The farmer finally decided that, as he had got along without an engine so long, he would not buy one. The shopkeeper, realizing that the day of scarcities had passed, decided to hide all the engines but one. When the next prospective purchaser came in he was told that there was one little engine in the shop, and he immediately decided to take it. That is the psychology of scarcity, honourable senators, and that is what the farmer is up against in everything he goes to buy. As to hired men, there is easier work available and it is impossible to get help.

It seems to me that the law of common sense should be applied to some of the problems facing the farmer. What is the position of the hog producer when he has an animal that is a pound or two overweight. Not only does he lose the premium, but he is docked \$2. He is penalized to the same extent

when the hog is a pound or two light. But when the consumer goes to buy bacon does he ever say: "Give me some bacon off that hog that was a pound overweight, and I will take it at two or three cents less." Did you ever hear of anything so ridiculous? Yet the right honourable gentlemen in the other place would have the farmer subjected to such unreasonable requirements.

I know that during the war years an attempt was made to improve the quality of our bacon; but my contention is that the trouble has been not with the quality of the bacon but with the process of curing it. It does seem to me that the law of common sense should apply. True, after the meat strike occurred some effort was made to have hogs accepted at other than the stipulated weight. It must be remembered also that across the border from western Canada hogs are bringing 25 cents a pound live weight, and we have been getting an average of 19 or 20 cents, dressed weight. That is the situation. Yet we are short of bacon and fat. I believe the shortage will continue until a sensible policy is adopted and a man is paid for what he produces. I am disappointed at the blundering policy with respect to farm products.

From what I have heard since coming down to Ottawa I would not be surprised if we had a general election soon. I heard some old straw being threshed by a man who could not talk about anything else under the sun. Certainly I expected to hear something about Canada's plans for assisting other countries in the face of an uncertain future; but the talk is about the Tory party; the other issue is as dead as wild pigeons, or the dodo.

Hon. Mr. HOWARD: Or the Tory party.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: I remember that years ago, when cattle were selling at very low prices, Sir Robert Borden made arrangements to secure a market for a certain number in the United States; and at a great Liberal rally in the city of Montreal, the complaint was raised that he was allowing our cattle to be disposed of over the border when the price of beef locally had gone up to 10 or 15 cents a pound. At that time the Liberal party was working for the consumer. It may be that the purpose of this whole scheme is to punish the West to the tune of half a billion dollars because we out there are bad fellows, having voted Social Credit or C.C.F.; but do you suppose that treatment of this kind is going to induce us to support the government? I would emphasize as strongly as I can the mistake which has been made, and would urge, even at this late date, that we should be allowed to sell our cattle in the United States.