

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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The Leader of the Opposition

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Subject.....

Terrifying Problems.

But even this is only a segment of the circle. In focussing attention upon problems of relief and unemployment as they exist in cities and towns, where agencies of publicity are constantly at work, we are too apt to forget the terrifying problems with which men and women and children in rural and isolated communities are faced. The farmer is as dependent for the support of himself and his family upon his crop and other products as the wage earner is upon the employment he may be able to secure. Where crops fail, or are destroyed by pest, or rust, or hail, or drought, or where livestock perish through disease or lack of sufficient nourishment, there is a situation often more appalling than any which confronts the city dweller. The condition is only one degree less hazardous or baffling where, for want of markets, crops must be destroyed or cattle slaughtered.

Let us never forget that the problem of privation on the plains is as important as that of privation in the cities and towns. They are the two sides of one and the same problem; the plight of the nation as a whole. To be dealt with successfully, they must be viewed as one.

Govt. Expenditure.

The rising tide of urban unemployment and of rural distress has been accompanied by a rising tide of government expenditure. From the time Mr. Bennett's government came into office until the 31st of March of this year, the federal government had spent, as its share of relief expenditures, the sum of \$160,000,000. In addition, similar vast amounts have been spent by the provinces and municipalities. In the same period, the government loaned to the provinces and to corporations, under relief legislation, the sum of \$82,000,000, and

guaranteed loans to the extent of \$66,000,000. This does not include any estimate of the amount guaranteed in connection with the government's wheat operations. Apart from the guarantees on this account, Mr. Bennett's administration had incurred, for relief purposes, by the end of our last fiscal year, a total financial responsibility of \$308,000,000. This amount is more than the complete annual expenditure of the Dominion of Canada in any years since Confederation up to the third year of the Great War.

Present Situation.

And what, as a result of all this, is the present situation? At the end of five years of mounting and colossal expenditure, the numbers of the unemployed are at least four times what they were in September, 1930, and relief is demanded on as great a scale as ever. We find young, homeless, unemployed men congregated by thousands in camps administered by the Department of National Defence. We have seen these young men become inflammable material in the hands of unscrupulous agitators; and the camps themselves become, as was inevitable, breeding grounds for Communism and defeatism. The country has witnessed strikes in relief camps in all parts of Canada. It has seen relief strikers and unemployed trekking into cities already overcrowded with men out of work, and hunger marchers converging from the provinces upon the Capital, as a means of indicating the source of responsibility and redress.

But, more than all this, the ruthless manner in which, in some particulars, the situation has been handled, has led to riot, serious injury, and loss of life. The irony of the situation must be apparent to all, when it is recalled that it was at Regina, in the general elections of 1930, that Mr. Bennett, seeking to arouse the passions of the unemployed, and to prejudice their minds against the government which was then in office, used the words: "Nine years of wasted effort before the great betrayal; it did not take Judas that long."