

than fifteen per cent; if our manufactures have been able to register an increase of at least eighteen per cent, we most certainly owe it to that system of agreements entered into by the various parts of the British Empire and to the various treaties that Canada made with other nations.

Employment increased by twenty-four per cent. The building trades recorded an advance of thirty-five per cent. Car loadings increased by fifteen per cent, which enabled our railways to improve their position and to raise their revenues by 11.5 per cent in the case of the Canadian National Railways, and 10.4 per cent for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Our international exchanges, importations and exportations, have increased 52 per cent over last year, leaving a trade balance of more than \$124,000,000 in our favour.

Logically the tendency to improvement is bound to become stronger. The Bank of Canada will undoubtedly play a great part and is bound to be of great value to us. The farmer, on his land, feels better protected against the uncertainties of life and the difficulties with which he has been left so long to struggle. The Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act is perhaps, among the good deeds of this government, that which produced the best results, and best served to restore courage and confidence among the creditors as well as the farmers themselves. One of my constituents who took advantage of the act, assured me that for the first time in three years he felt at ease, and that he never so heartily took to his daily labour.

Last year, in that same respect, we amended the Farm Loan Act in order to facilitate loans and thus to keep on his own land the most essential worker of our economic system, I mean, the toiler of the soil.

The speech from the throne informs us that we will do still better this year. I wonder whether we should not take away the administration of this act from the provinces. This duplication of jurisdiction does not appeal to me. How many times, in Quebec, did they try to throw certain cumbersome responsibilities on the Dominion government? How many legitimate requests were denied? How many inhuman proceedings were taken against poor farmers who were temporarily unable to meet their obligations. We should have a purely federal organization, absolutely free, and above all political parties, to which the working and carrying out of that law would be left entirely.

There are probably many more suggestions just as practical which could be made in connection with this government measure and

also with many equally interesting problems. To give these problems, whether they be of a general or particular nature, a quick, adequate and really effective solution, the authorities have a right to depend on the co-operation of specialists, selected among the various business and social activities. It is with that understanding that the government informs us of the creation of a national economic council, "medium of deliverance and salvation," to use Mr. Eugene L'Heureux's words, who added the following very interesting comments in *L'Action Catholique* of January 16:

"An era distinguished by a more intensive and more refined production than the preceding one, but in the course of which the proportion of men being a public charge increases, is not an era of progress; it is a backward step for civilization and a disgrace for the Christian world. None but satiated egotists could tolerate such disorder. The people responsible for that disorder are certain financiers, dictators of trade and industry, tormentors of the farmers and often bribers of public institutions. Until we have taken away from pretentious and incompetent people the control of the economic world to place it in the hands of the governing authorities acting on the advice of the best economists and sociologists of the nation brought together in an organization such as the Economic Council, that disorder will continue, with its hardships, its atrocities, its instigations to revolt. . . . That is why the prospect of an Economic Council at Ottawa really is cheerful."

The situation thus depicted by Mr. L'Heureux, who cannot be said to be a socialist, is that which I have attempted to describe in this already very long speech of mine, and it justifies more than ever the intervention of the state and the substitution of its power to that of the money interests. With the Liberal economic doctrine we had been used to leave to the individuals some prerogatives which essentially belong to the state and to ignore certain principles of government. If the people put themselves under the authority of a concrete power, of a master, it is because they have always felt the necessity of a proper equilibrium between the various classes of their community. The great theorist of the Thomistic school, in some pages still very much of present interest, although they were written in the thirteenth century, thus described the part of the government: "The state is the collective power that protects the free development of the individual faculties and sees that none usurps the right of another."

The plan put forward by the honourable Prime Minister and the reforms asserted in the speech from the throne will at last enable the state to recover the part which properly is its own. It will thus more easily promote the common welfare, correcting what