

figures the breakdown of incomes in this country for 1946 showed that those receiving up to \$1,000 a year totalled 13.7 per cent, while those receiving from \$1,000 to \$2,000 a year comprised 52.8 per cent of our population. The figures show that 89.3 per cent of the people of Canada earning incomes received less than \$3,000 a year. If you take the two lower groups and add 52.8 per cent to 13.7 per cent you get 66.5 per cent; and you can appreciate the position of 66.5 per cent of the people of Canada who are receiving less than \$2,000 a year and still have to pay income tax.

If I were to carry on a bit further I might point out that the trend in regard to savings over the last three years is very serious. The speech from the throne makes reference to this wave of prosperity which is supposed to be bubbling around us.

We may have been at the crest, but it appears from the report on savings that the crest has passed and we are on the way down. Soon, we may be in the trough. In 1944, the percentage of income that went into savings was 21.6 per cent; that is, it was possible to save roughly one-fifth of your income, taken on an average across Canada. By 1947, that percentage of income which could be saved fell to 6.4 per cent. This is a serious drop in the space of three years. If that trend continues, by 1950 and 1951, that portion of income which the ordinary people of Canada can save will have disappeared entirely owing to the high prices.

**Mr. McCann:** The government was doing the saving for them in 1944.

**Mr. Zaplitny:** You are no doubt referring to compulsory savings. Whether they were compulsory or voluntary, they were savings at the disposal of the people of Canada. The portion of income people have been able to save has slipped from 21.6 per cent in 1944 to 6.4 per cent in 1947. You cannot refute that argument.

I wish to refer to a few more items in connection with agriculture. The speech from the throne makes mention of an amendment to the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. I have no way of knowing just what is contemplated, but I do hope it will include the type of amendment we have urged from here on several occasions in the past, to the effect that the unit be made smaller than a township for the purpose of qualifying for assistance. In Manitoba, particularly the northern part of that province, where we suffer more from hail and flood than we do from drought, such an amendment would be of importance to many farmers in acquiring assistance to which they are morally entitled but which,

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because of the technicality involved in putting it on a township basis, is denied them. I have taken this matter up on so many occasions, I shall not take the time to go into details. The Minister of Agriculture knows very well what I mean. He has been in the area and has seen for himself the grave injustices which arise from the present system of administering the act. It must be made possible to administer it on a smaller unit basis so that the farmers who actually need assistance will be the ones to receive it.

At the present time we have the anomaly of farmers who have a good crop receiving assistance on top of that, whereas the farmers who are completely wiped out by flood or hail get nothing. Surely, that is an administrative problem which should be solved before this session is completed.

There is also need for the extension of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. As a matter of fact some members, including the member for Souris (Mr. Ross), have argued the act should be made applicable to all farmers from coast to coast. I am going to make this plea to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), that the designated area be extended to include the three prairie provinces. As it is now, it covers only a section of the three prairie provinces, usually referred to as the Palliser triangle. There are other parts of these provinces which need the services of the rehabilitation provisions just as seriously. There is a need for flood prevention and water conservation, which makes it necessary to extend the operative provisions of that act to take in the total area of the three prairie provinces. I am sure the minister will give that suggestion serious consideration, knowing the problem as he does, around the area of Dauphin particularly, about which I am speaking at the present time.

Another thing which would bring about greater national unity would be an equalization of the burden of freight rates across this country. It is not necessary for me to go into detail on this subject because we talked freight rates at the last session until we dreamed about them. Nothing has been done as yet to solve the problem. The railway companies have received one increase of 21 per cent and have made application for another increase of 20 per cent.

May I say at this point that I am pleased to see the hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) take his seat. As premier of the province of Manitoba, he was one of those who went all over that province making a lot of fine speeches about their opposition to the increased freight rates. Fate has so arranged it that the hon. member is today the Minister of Justice. I say it is his duty now