

description. Those of us who have studied economics know very well that so far as such men are concerned, no matter what the condition of the masses may be, they themselves are always prosperous because they are living on the earnings of the masses; and it is futile for the Prime Minister or any one else to say that we are enjoying general prosperity. It is true that we made great developments during last year and, that as I have already said, we have prosperity in many quarters, but not amongst the people generally.

The leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) and the Prime Minister have had a field day. I do not know that I have ever listened to more hair-splitting than I have heard this afternoon and this evening; so much so that if Mr. Speaker gathered up the split hairs he would have had enough to fill a nice sized cushion.

In the speech from the throne it is stated:

And it is not to be forgotten that the bulk of the 1929 wheat crop still remains in Canadian hands for final disposition.

It is implied by the remarks of the Prime Minister that when this final disposition is made, that is to say, when the wheat is sold in the markets of the world, which eventually probably will buy it, we will have an era of prosperity. That view, in my judgment, is absolutely erroneous, primarily because of the fact that the farmers who produced that wheat have sold it, consequently they have had their returns and in the great majority of cases have spent the money. Therefore even when this wheat is sold it will merely be for the purpose of repaying to the banks the amount of money which they have advanced to hold this wheat in store over a long period of time.

It is generally supposed that the western wheat grower has been prosperous, at least up to this year. The 1928 crop has been cited on so many occasions as a bumper crop that most of our people probably assume that the wheat grower was prosperous by reason of it. Now, the crop of 1928 was probably the poorest in quality of any crop that has been produced in western Canada, certainly in my experience, and I have been growing wheat in the west for the last twenty-six years, so that I know something of the wheat growers' problem. As a result of the poor quality, when the farmer did get his returns, although he may have had many bushels to the acre, the actual price received was so small that it did not make him prosperous even for one year. Unfortunately the weather conditions last year considerably retarded the growth of the wheat. The crop was much shorter, con-

sequently there was a second year with practically no profits amongst the farmers of the west. By virtue of that fact the western farmers have practically no purchasing power to-day. I regret to say that this will react on the industries in eastern Canada, but we cannot help it; the circumstances which bring this about are beyond our control.

The second paragraph of the speech from the throne opens with this statement:

Our trade with foreign countries has shown marked increase.

I fail to find where this increase is in our total trade. I have before me a report by the Department of National Revenue, being a summary of Canadian trade. The figures in this document are rather alarming. For instance, taking the total figures, our imports for the ten months ending January 31st of this year were \$21,000,000 greater than they were for the corresponding ten months of the previous year, but our exports were less by \$202,000,000. Taking the sum total of the imports and exports, we find that for the ten months to the 31st of January of this year, the latest date for which figures are available, there is a decline of \$181,000,000 compared with the corresponding period of the previous year. Under these circumstances I fail to see wherein the speech from the throne correctly states that our foreign trade has increased. True, our imports have increased, but our total foreign trade has decreased by \$181,000,000 if we take into account both our imports and our exports.

Some people seem to be very much afraid of the situation with regard to our export and import trade. I see nothing at the present time to feel depressed about. We recognize that the reduction in export is largely in agricultural products, and we expect and hope that before the next harvest we shall be able to sell at a reasonable price all the surplus wheat we have to-day. It has been stated in many papers in eastern Canada that we are holding out for an extortionate price, more particularly the wheat pool. So far as my knowledge goes, that is not so. We merely require a reasonable price to pay for the cost of production and give us an opportunity to live. That is all we are asking for. We are not asking for a price that can in any sense be termed extortionate. Before the end of the present grain season, as I say, we expect and hope to be able to dispose of all the surplus wheat at a reasonable price; that is all we expect. When that is done, no doubt the figures so far as imports and exports are concerned will be in closer proximity than they are at the present time.