

During the period this government has been in power, the annual average cash price received for No. 1 Northern wheat, basis Fort William, was as low as 62 cents a bushel; that of No. 2 oats, 29 cents; that of No. 2 barley, 40½ cents and that of rye, 40½ cents. The prices received at the farm were, of course, very much lower than this. Annual average egg prices were down to 17½ cents. Prices received for hogs, butter fat and cheese were, at certain times, just about one-half as high as those ruling to-day; while good steers sold for as little as one-third of their present value. If reasonable floor prices are needed at present and in the future, they were no less necessary in the earlier years of this administration's tenure of office. Farmers were just as entitled to reasonable floor prices in peace time as they are now in the later period of the war.

I shall not now go over each of the thirty points enunciated by our leader at this time. I shall refer only to two of these planks, leaving the others until a more detailed examination of the agricultural policy can be made in the house.

Here is point No. 8:

To bring about an expansion of our export markets and thereby higher standards of living generally, we shall be prepared, in accordance with the principles of the Atlantic charter, to progressively lower the barriers to trade; we shall set up a special export agency charged with the responsibility of promoting international trade, maintaining and expanding export markets for primary products, ensuring that domestic prices shall not be depressed because a small surplus may happen to result in making low export prices apply to both; and developing a positive programme of international collaboration, on the part of both exporting and importing countries, with a view to furthering the exchange of commodities and better international understanding and goodwill.

I mention also point No. 21, which deals with the increasingly important matter of agricultural research. A brief debate took place on this subject in the house last session. I now call upon the government to establish at once a national network of efficiently staffed research laboratories in order that agriculture will have at least as efficient research facilities as industry itself.

The government's policy respecting our production and export of bacon to Britain has been one of pronounced instability, fraught with sudden and frequent changes and guided by hindsight, rather than foresight. Various pronouncements of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and his department, ostensibly designed to guide our farmers in the matter of future production, have served only to create serious uncertainty and considerable bewilderment. The variation of the arrange-

ments with Britain regarding bacon has resulted in disappointment and dissatisfaction on the part of the agricultural population of Canada. Since the last session of the house, the wholesale slaughtering of brood sows and the general disintegration of the whole bacon industry have belatedly forced the government to give hog bonuses. The irreparable damage already done is a clear indication that these bonuses were long overdue.

Canadian farmers are willing and ready to produce enough hogs to meet Britain's bacon needs. But they quite properly feel that, if they do, the government should go at least part way to stabilize their position. This is but one of many striking examples which indicate the urgency for a forthright, vigorous, agricultural policy for this dominion.

Let the farmers of Canada contrast the single reference to agriculture in the speech from the throne with John Bracken's Lethbridge bill of rights for agriculture, and let them form their own conclusions as to where their friends in public life are. The speech from the throne and the government policy generally is bleak and barren when contrasted to the masterly programme for the relief of agriculture and the liberation of rural people as envisaged in the Lethbridge speech. It is significant that the only useful reference to agriculture in the speech from the throne was taken from John Bracken's address at Lethbridge itself.

Labour will look in vain in the throne address for either sympathy or a broad national labour policy. Not a single concrete proposal is to be found which would indicate that there are plans on foot to give labour its rightful position in the national partnership. High-sounding phrases about safeguarding the basic standard of living and standardizing wages and salary are poor and lame excuses for a government which should have established long before this a national labour code for Canada. The farmer is now having company; labour is joining him in that great group of forgotten men in the dominion.

This government embarked upon a programme of war production without adequately consulting labour or inviting it to share the responsibilities of administration, but let me caution the government that no programme of rehabilitation and reconstruction can succeed without the active cooperation of the labour movement.

Schemes for providing social security are not effective substitutes in themselves for higher earning power and continuous employment. All these plans can do is to spread the national income more evenly. There is grave danger that they may collapse and that inflation will result unless the national output of consumer's