

# BRACKEN APPEALS FOR FAIR DEAL FOR AGRICULTURE

(Continued from page 1.)

## STEPS TOWARD RECOVERY

It is our first and primary objective to correct Canada's greatest social inequity, — the inferior economic position into which agriculture has been allowed to fall, and for all too long, except for a few years of the last war, to remain.

We are setting out to remove the fear of a post-war collapse of agricultural income, such as occurred within two years after the last war, and such as manifested itself so disastrously in the ten years preceding this war; and to secure for those engaged in agriculture a position of economic equality with others giving a comparable service in the Canadian economy.

When I speak of agriculture, I do not mean farms and material considerations alone. I mean farmers and farmers' wives and children and all those, both in urban and rural areas, who are dependent upon the prosperity of farming for their material welfare.

There are nearly three-quarters of a million farms in Canada, and over three million farm folks living on them.

The farms are in all Provinces — 12,234 in Prince Edward Island, 26,372 in British Columbia, 31,881 in New Brunswick, 32,963 in Nova Scotia, 58,022 in Manitoba, 99,716 in Alberta, 138,703 in Saskatchewan, 154,629 in Quebec and 178,169 in Ontario. The farm folks living on these farms are normal human beings with the hopes and aspirations of other Canadians. As a class, they have not in peacetime had a fair deal in Canada's economy. It is an inequity that is no credit to us. It is one that ought no longer to be perpetuated.

In our approach toward equality for agriculture, we shall enlist the co-operation of the organized farmers of Canada and of other representative men in the industry; we shall at all times consult with representative agricultural groups in the formulation of agricultural policy; and we shall see that agriculture is represented on all administrative as well as advisory boards that have to do with important matters respecting the industry.

We shall appoint as Minister of Agriculture, a man who is trained in the practice of agriculture. And in addition we shall appoint an Under Secretary of Agriculture, who also shall be trained in the practice of agriculture. Should the Minister be from Eastern Canada, the Under Secretary will be from Western Canada and vice versa. It is in the interests of both Eastern and Western Agriculture that both be fairly represented in the administration of the Department.

## RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY

We shall place under the Ministry of Agriculture the responsibility for developing a co-ordinated plan of production and marketing for Canada. We shall place under that Ministry not only the administration of all production and marketing plans, but also the growing responsibilities recognized by the Governments of the Allied Nations at the recent Conference on Food and Agriculture, with respect to food and its distribution. We shall provide for Canadian agriculture a special foreign agricultural service, the personnel of which will be located at strategic food importing points, and to occupy itself with the enlargement of the markets for Canadian agricultural products in other countries.

We shall appoint a Board of Livestock Commissioners, in which shall be vested power to regulate and direct all aspects of livestock marketing, in somewhat the same manner as the Board of Grain Commissioners regulates the handling of wheat.

To do away with the risk of the all too frequent ruinously low prices for agricultural products and, at the same time, reach higher standards of living for all, we shall raise farm prices, not by decreasing the supply of farm products but by increasing the demand for them; we shall set out to build not a world of scarcity, but a world of plenty. In the interest of agriculture itself and as one means of guarding against industrial unemployment, we are determined to see that the purchasing power of Canada's farmers, as well as her workers in other spheres, is maintained at a reasonable level.

In the interest alike of agriculture and of Canada and of world peace, we shall deal with the problem of low prices arising from agricultural surpluses by, amongst other things, expanding our export markets to the fullest extent that we can. In previous days, there were 30 million acres in Western Canada devoted to the production of products for export. There were only 17 million acres of crop land in all five provinces of Eastern Canada. If Western and other Canadian farms are forced through failure to obtain export markets, to enter into competition with Eastern farmers for Eastern markets, what will happen to the prosperity of Eastern Canadian farmers, who now supply those Eastern Canadian markets? The answer is obvious. It must be clear that the problem of agriculture in Canada is one of equal concern to both Eastern and Western farmers. It is not a Western problem only. It is one of our outstanding national problems.

## EXPORT MARKETS

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 program 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.

To find additional outlets for our surplus products, we shall expand our home markets by increasing the purchasing power of our people, raising the average standard of nutrition, developing industrial uses for farm products, and by instituting, if necessary, a "stamp" plan for low-income groups.

In order to prevent wide fluctuations of farm prices; we shall, in the case of our major export products, provide a floor price below which they will not be permitted to fall, and we shall allow to the producers the benefit of any advance thereon. Since price ceilings are now being maintained to prevent farm prices from rising to high levels in wartime, we shall see to it that price floors are provided, to prevent farm prices from dropping to unfair levels in peacetime. There should not be price ceilings on farm prices to prevent inflation in wartime, without price floors to prevent deflation in peace time.

We shall pass such Federal marketing legislation as may be necessary to provide for orderly marketing.

We shall revise our marketing system for wheat as to retain those features that perform a useful economic function and eliminate any that may be merely to the advantage of the professional speculator. For this purpose, we shall, by legislation, provide for any necessary supervision.

## SUBMARGINAL FARMS

As part of the policy of establishing agriculture on a sound economic basis, we shall inaugurate a vigorous policy of better land utilization and, through it, facilitate the transfer of sub-marginal farm lands to more economic uses; and we shall, in so far as Dominion jurisdiction will permit, avoid the error all too common in the past of allowing the settlement by land-hungry settlers, by state aided unemployed or by state assisted war

veterans, of land incapable of providing a decent living for a family.

12. During the process of securing wider markets and of achieving more economic uses for submarginal lands, we shall guarantee fair prices to those who produce the nation's food. By fair prices, we mean prices not out of line with the prices farmers have to pay for their manufactured goods and services — prices that will bear a fair relationship to wages in industry and other callings — in other words, fair prices mean prices that will give to farmers their fair share of the nation's income.

13. To help reduce the cost of producing farm crops, we shall reinforce existing legislation to curb combines in restraint of trade; take steps to insure that the prices farmers have to pay are truly competitive; inquire into ways and means of increasing the efficiency of manufacturing and distributing industrial and other goods; encourage farmers to purchase as well as market goods on a co-operative basis; and generally assist them to produce as well as to buy more efficiently.

14. To increase the efficiency of marketing, we shall make provision for a thorough and impartial study of the relative merits of existing and possible marketing methods and costs; provide for continuous investigation and control of price spreads in the interests of producers and consumers alike; put into effect a Federal Co-operative Act that will, among other things, clarify the position of co-operatives with respect to taxation of savings and promote in every legitimate way, the practice of co-operative marketing and co-operation generally.

15. The above are constructive measures toward the establishment of a sound agricultural economy. We mean to take these and any other steps that may be found necessary to assure to the agricultural population all the essentials of an average Canadian standard of living, based on the objective of equality for the industry within the Canadian economy. That much no reasonable person can deny to agriculture. Less than that, no reasonable person can wish to perpetuate.

## COLD STORAGE FACILITIES

16. To guard against a shortage of supply of food for human consumption in Canada, we shall plan, in the general interest of all, to maintain a reserve of supplies of the major storable food products; and we shall encourage the establishment of private as well as co-operative cold storage facilities for the more perishable products, such as fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry and eggs.

Other reserves — international in character — for insurance against shortage of human food will be needed, if the world outside is to be fed adequately. We shall help to produce a generous share of these reserves, but we shall regard it as the responsibility of the co-operating nations — including Canada — to provide and carry the cost of this protection against human want.

17. Since the provision of reserves to insure against possible future shortage of the more important food products is clearly the responsibility of the state, we shall see to it that, either directly or indirectly, the state, and not the farmer, shall bear the carrying charges of thus insuring itself against any shortage of human food.

18. In order to help make the use of credit available to farmers who require it, and to co-operative institutions which need it, at low rates of interest as are economically possible, in an effort to serve agriculture with the same efficiency as the commercial banks and other lending institutions are now serving business, — we shall enquire into the success and experience of the Farm Credit Administration of the United States and other countries, assess the success and scope of present loaning services with a view to promoting their efficiency; and we shall see to it that such additional credit institutions as are needed, especially equipped to serve agriculture, are provided through the agency of a central farm bank.

19. In order that losses on farm loans may be lessened and interest rates thereby reduced, we shall see that the state gives constructive aid by surveying and classifying all lands in farms or likely to be farmed, so that the most efficient soil and cropping practices may be developed, the respective capacities for economical production made known, their relative value as security for loans more accurately ascertained, and potential losses on farm loans thereby avoided.

## FARM DEBT ADJUSTMENTS

20. To meet the problem of land debts in areas where it has been or can be demonstrated that they are beyond the earning capacity of the land, under good management, to meet, adequate provision for re-adjustment and reduction, where necessary, of such debts, by Federal legislation, will be made. It will not be the intent of such legislation to make possible the avoidance of obligations by inefficient or incompetent borrowers but rather the adjustment of only such debts as an examination by independent and competent persons reveals could not be met in full, even by efficient farmers. If in any Province this legislation should not be desired by its Provincial Legislature, we would be disposed to accede to its recommendations with respect to the matter.

21. In the interests of both efficient production and increased uses for farm products, we shall extend the facilities for agricultural research. A National Research Laboratory is already located in Eastern Canada at Ottawa. To deal with agricultural research in the West, including that relating to new uses of agricultural products for industrial purposes, a branch of the National Research organization will be established in that area; to deal specifically with the annual wastage of livestock through disease, we shall establish, through the Health of Animals Branch, additional and adequate facilities for a thorough study of contagious animal diseases; for research work on general agricultural, horticultural and livestock problems, financial assistance will be extended to universities and agricultural colleges; and to supplement the very valuable and practical but too little appreciated work of the county and district agricultural representatives, every measure of co-operation will be given.

## TRANSPORTATION

22. In view of the great importance of transportation in the Canadian economy, the desirability of keeping freight rates as low as possible in order to help compete with other exporting countries and more particularly the necessity of preventing waste due to overlapping of different forms of carriers such as the railways, water carriers, trucks and buses and air services, — provision will be made to enquire into the creation of a fully integrated system of transportation in Canada, adapted to furnish the nation with the cheapest and most efficient service possible consistent with the maintenance of the independent identity of the two great railway systems and without any amalgamation or unification.

23. In view of the normal increase in population in rural areas at a time when the agricultural industry is overdeveloped in relation to markets and when increasing mechanization of farming is lessening rather than increasing the number of workmen required for farm work with the consequence that young people from the farms are pressed into service in urban centres, sometimes with but little or no specialized training — we shall, through co-operation with the provinces assist in providing vocational training for rural young people as well as urban; and we shall provide opportunities for those seeking work or changes of employment, through the more effective organization of employment agencies.

24. In order to preserve the family farm in Canada, a unit which is now threatened by the competition of larger units in this and other countries, we shall speed up and systematize the use of plans by which the overhead cost to farmers of securing the advantages of mechanization may be lowered; by co-operation and by co-operative ownership and to the extent it may be advisable by state or municipal ownership of power equipment, — we shall develop and encourage plans through which fewer machines



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(and therefore less overhead) will be required to do the work for which under present practice more are needed; and we shall plan for supplementary employment for farm workers in off-seasons by encouraging the development of complementary enterprises and as far as may be practicable by promoting rural electrification and otherwise encourage the decentralization of industry, and the location in rural areas of such small-scale industrial enterprises as may be suited to the locality.

## EDUCATION

25. Since in Canada, education depends upon land taxation for a large part of its revenue, and the rate of taxation on land in many areas is excessively high and not within the jurisdiction of the Dominion Government to reduce, and yet does not provide sufficient revenue for educational needs, often resulting in unjustifiable inequality to children in many parts of Canada, — in view of this condition we shall see that the Federal Government, without interfering with provincial jurisdiction, provides a measure of financial assistance in order that the provinces may make possible a higher standard of instruction in the financially weak school districts of Canada.

26. In view of the heavy drain upon the fertility and productive capacity of Canadian farm lands caused by the exhaustive type of farming many producers are forced to follow, we shall put into operation plans for the conservation as well as the development of the vast store of wealth in our greatest heritage — the upper foot of the nation's soil. That wealth is being detrimentally drawn upon today to the nation's great disadvantage, because the incomes of many of those engaged in the industry do not permit them to do otherwise than mine the soil. This applies to every province in Canada. Although damage from soil erosion by wind has been particularly severe in parts of Western Canada, where more than 2 1/2 million acres of land once cultivated has been abandoned, soil erosion by water is becoming an increasingly serious problem in many parts of all other sections of the nation. A national soil conservation policy including reforestation in certain areas must be established if increasing numbers of farms are not to be forced into abandonment.

## RURAL HEALTH SERVICES

27. In view of the inadequate medical and hospital services now prevailing in many rural districts, due chiefly to unfavourable economic conditions, we shall co-operate with the provinces with a view to placing and keeping the health services of rural areas on a par with those of urban areas and to raising the standard of both.

28. In order to help bring more modern conveniences to the aid of women in rural homes and to farmers in their productive activities, at the lowest possible cost, we shall co-operate with the provinces, through works projects for providing employment, in an effort to extend such self-liquidating projects as the distribution of electrical power, the improvement of rural homes and the construction of better roads, to as many as practicable of the rural farmsteads and communities as are in need of these services.

29. In order to remove the fear from men's minds that surpluses hangina over markets may recur and again drive farm prices to unjustifiably low levels, we must see that these surpluses are allowed neither to impoverish their producers nor to be withheld from serving their possible humanitarian functions in a hungry world, they must be so managed that they will neither unduly depress farm prices nor yet be delayed in the service of their proper function, the feeding of the human race.

To some countries in early post-war years, a part of the food surplus will have to be given away—even as it is now—but the state will have to do the giving, not the agricultural third of the

state; in the case of some other countries they can be paid for, which is the condition toward which the world's economy must be brought. Let us determine to use our fortunate position as food producers to accomplish three things much needed in Canada and in our sister nations:

- (1) Acceptance of equity for agricultural producers as a fundamental right;
- (2) Feeding of hungry nations in postwar years as a humanitarian duty; and
- (3) Restoration of world amity and world trade on the foundation of goodwill and understanding as an international necessity for world order, world progress and enduring peace.

## CONCLUSION

30. In order to secure for the farming population, which is not well organized, equality of status in the Canadian economy, with organized labour, and organized industry, and other classes which are well organized, we shall, by decentralizing administrative functions and controls as much as possible; by promoting district, municipal, and county consideration of local problems; by means of Federal legislation, if necessary, to make adequate financing of effective agricultural organization possible; and by giving the industry itself a large share of responsibility for working out its own salvation—in these ways, we shall help agriculture not only to promote a larger measure of equity for itself but also to defend its own as well as the general interest when public bodies are giving consideration to such demands of any group as call for larger contributions or concessions from the state, of which agriculture is such a large part and in far too many instances not an equal beneficiary of its policies.

In its relatively unorganized condition, agriculture has not been in a position to speak with a united voice and its appeals have yielded but temporary and sometimes unround answers for the redress of ills which require basic treatment. Until such time as it is possible for agriculture to achieve something like full organization for itself, the state must see that its legitimate interests are protected in order that the inequities of long standing will not be still further unnecessarily perpetuated or increased.

## IN MEMORIAM

MRS. ALEXANDER WADDELL

The death occurred in Medford, Oct. 16, 1943, of Mary (MacInnis) widow of Alexander Waddell, age 78 years. Funeral services at the West Medford Baptist Church, Tuesday, Oct. 19, at 3:30 p.m. The widow of Alexander Waddell was twice married, her first husband being the late Jas. MacInnis of Tryon, of whom the following sons and daughters are left to mourn the loss of a kind and loving mother, Bowley, Walter, Percy, Harold, Marshall, Alice, Areta, Mrs. Reas, Lizzie, Mrs. Albert MacDonald of Western Canada; Ruth having predeceased her a few years ago.



Gnr. John R. Waddell, son of Mr. John A. Waddell, Richmond, Me., serving overseas for the past two years.

(Patriot please copy)