

People's Forum

ALBERTA'S ILLS

MILK RIVER, Alberta.
July 2nd, 1931.

Editor, Herald—

Sir: Poor Alberta! Misfortunes never come singly. You have a lot of hard luck and then things turn around and get worse. It would seem almost complete with drought, poor prices and unemployment but things never get so bad they can't get worse.

The Warner U.F.A. District convention had to listen to the Honorable Geo. Hoadley on the cause and cure of our present industrial depression. Conditions were bad enough already but to get advice from blind leaders caps the climax. The general inactivity and policy of obstruction of the Farmer government was enough to curse about, but the Honorable George takes the prize.

He tells us we have too much machinery and too many high pressure salesmen. Farmers are not capable of judging as to the methods to employ in production. The trouble started with the motor car. It was such a temptation, the farmer bought a tractor so as to have leisure to use the car and had no time to bother with harnessing and looking after horses. We also demanded good roads to use the car and were tempted to make longer trips.

The Hart-Parr agents were the real wise guys, as they took our horses to trade and let us dependent on their tractors. We have been buying too many luxuries, squandered our money and went in debt for more. The vicious circle is complete. Our only hope is co-operation. We must curtail buying and cut out the middle-men as they have in the old country where one half the population are served by co-operative societies.

The minister of Agriculture also emphasized the great benefit to be derived by serving meals cafeteria style in our mental hospital. An Eastern institution has put down the daily garbage from one hundred to ninety-eight pounds by this innovation. He hopes to secure the necessary grant at the next session of the House so as to make this wonderful change. This rounds out the plan of reform and brings it to a complete and symmetrical whole. If we get opinions and advice of this nature from cabinet ministers what must be the intellect of the rank and file of voters who listen and applaud and re-elect these mediocre men to office? If such ideas and policies are a reflection of popular thought then I say, "God help Alberta." If the people of this province are incapable of any better explanation of our present condition we may as well end the thing called democracy with revolution or adopt the Russian plan. It must be evident that, if in the past, we had neglected to spend and had been frugal and thrifty and purchased the barest necessities, there would have been a larger amount of surplus goods to be disposed of. This would have made our plight worse or would have brought on the crisis sooner. The simple facts are we have not lived high enough in the past to consume the good things that are produced in such lavish abundance by scientific methods and the use of labor saving machinery. We must either consume these goods ourselves or export them to other countries. Every other nation is in the same fix. They have goods to export and prohibit imports. Where can we find a market? Our own people want a larger share of our surplus goods now. We have a market at home that we are neglecting. We oppress our own buyers by penalizing them with taxation on everything they buy. This curtails consumption and causes unemployment.

If the voters of Alberta adopt a plan of procuring public revenue that will not increase the cost of goods to consumers they can call a halt to the present depression. Land values and special privileges are created by all and would provide plenty of revenue for all public needs. The revenue from this source would be so great that we could stand even the waste of our present plan of feeding mental patients without adopting the cafeteria style advocated by the Honorable George Hoadley.

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