

My Dear Prime Minister.

As I sit in our comfortable farm home and watch the snow drifting across the fields driven by a twenty five mile an hour wind, temperature at 30° below zero and wind chill of 80° below I am reminded that the scene will be utterly changed in five months time. The cold beauty of winter and its snow, in this western country will have given place to the soft greens of leafed trees and the greening fields of young grain and you Sir, may just be in the throes of a federal election that may decide for many years to come which road Canada will take. That of departure at the cross roads, to become two Canadas, complete in dual entity, East Canada & West Canada, or to remain one nation under one flag, homogeneous as to population but growing closer together instead of further apart.

Perhaps the seat of power is, at best, a tenuous one. I think that most of us realize that in four years of administration one can only hope to lay some groundwork that in the future may be a solid basis on which to found a cooperative unity of ten provinces under one national flag. It remains to be seen just how willing peoples of east Canada and west Canada are willing to go along with the idea, because I feel that deep down within us remains the old, old, human knowledge that Divided we fall, United we stand. However, set over against that feeling and as an antithesis

is the growing feeling across the west that politically we can hope for little cooperation from Eastern Canada.

You have travelled across these western prairies yourself and although at some points your reception by ^{people claiming to} western ^{represent} farmers was certainly beneath the dignity of your office and your person it ~~crisade~~ ^{clearly} bears in some degree evidence of the frustration that is growing increasingly in the west.

As long as humanity endures so also within segments of that humanity will endure the feeling of social injustice. For as long as I can remember, politically, and that goes back for fifty years, come election time we are faced with candidates from all parties and of every political stripe making specious promises as to what will be done if they or their party are re-elected. Of late years that has taken a more sinister form in the manner of grain payments, subsidies and so forth being made to western Agriculture just before election time. At least to the onlooker it would seem both profitable and coincident that payments of the farmers own money have been made to them just prior to federal elections. Perhaps the timing has not been coincidental but deliberately planned. What one hears on the hustings as commentary. "What do they think we are, a bunch of numbskulls to be bribed, and with our own money!! The press media takes it up and publishes far and wide how much money the Government is pouring

into the pockets of Agriculture at a certain date. Blandly omitting the fact that the money belonged to Agriculture anyway. To Government Officials including Cabinet Ministers I expect it looks as if "You're damned if you do and damned if you don't". To the average western farmer who is really interested in agriculture as his contribution to society and the country of his birth, and not mere day to day dollar values it appears that no matter what party is elected to carry on the government of the country agriculture will never receive that portion of the national income that will enable a farmer to pass on to those who succeed him land that is well looked after and cared for and that during his lifetime has not needed ^{tons of} commercial fertilizer to ~~take~~ ^{eat} out the last pitiful dollar from each starved overcropped acre of land.

It is not my intention in writing you to belabor the situation in which western Agriculture finds itself. Nor do I believe I speak for a majority of men on the land. I do think I voice the opinions of a great many farmers who are really concerned, socially, not financially what is happening to our western economy. We see the growth of urban centers at the expense of rural. In Manitoba we can offer equal living conditions comparable to any urban home. Our children and grandchildren

have all the educational advantages, or nearly so,
of any urban child or adolescent. Many of the
young men and women who grow up in our rural
areas would elect to stay on the land if they could
possibly acquire some land to provide them with a
foundation to start from. Many farmers watch sons
whom they have trained in farm management leave for
the already overcrowded cities to try and find work
simply because there is not income, comparable to
the work that has to be done, to equate with the hours
of work and income in the cities. New legislation that
~~you~~ you have introduced may in some way help older men retire
from active work if they so wish & reestablish a son or
relative on the same land but the fact still remains
that the son or relative will remain in indebted bondage
for most of his useful life. One feels inclined to question
how many times has the land - which is ours only in
stewardship - got to produce its quota of usury to
those who are not in the least interested outside
their own pecuniary gain. It appears the answer is
from generation to generation and the burden becomes
intolerable. That is the condition which we in the west
now approach - as does your bid for a continuing term
in office.