

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

peak. Yet in another column I find that in 1948 we exported goods valued at \$686 million to Great Britain and in 1949 \$705 million. So I say this afternoon, when the minister made such a statement, he was absolutely inaccurate. He went on further this afternoon: We have not lost our export market to Britain; we are up 37 per cent over the previous year. Well, technically the minister was correct; they were 37 per cent over 1950. But what the minister forgot to tell this committee was that exports were down very considerably as compared with 1948, and down even more substantially as compared with 1949. Therefore I do not think that this statement was technically accurate. The minister went on to say: Canada has found markets for everything it could produce. I wish that some of the apple growers of Nova Scotia had been here this afternoon and heard the minister make the statement. The hon. member for Cape Breton South told me that down in his part of the country they are paying apple growers \$5 a tree to dig up their trees, because they cannot find any markets for their apples.

I hold in my hand the supplementary estimates passed by this House of Commons on March 31, and I find item 568, \$1,200,000, "to provide assistance to the apple growers in British Columbia"; item 569 is for \$300,000, to provide assistance to the apple growers in Nova Scotia. If the minister could sell all the apples that he could find, why are the taxpayers paying those subsidies? I wish he would explain.

When the minister suggested that he has no marketing troubles today he was overlooking beef, despite what he said; because, while this new agreement which was announced several days ago is a very important factor in the marketing of beef, yet certainly it is not going to take more than 15 per cent or 20 per cent of the exports which we had last year to the United States. While the new agreement will help for two or three months, at the end of that time we are going to be back precisely where we were before. I think most hon. members do not honestly believe that the American embargo will be lifted for a year or two years at the earliest. If that is the case we are going to have very real difficulties in marketing beef before very long.

**Mr. Ferrie:** What do you know about beef?

**Mr. Thatcher:** When I look at the hon. member, I don't think he knows too much.

There is one other point. In the figures which the minister put on the record this afternoon, he said that our exports to Britain in 1951 were greater than they were in 1950.

[Mr. Thatcher.]

That is technically true, as I said; but the point he did not mention was that many of those increases were caused by increases in war materials which we sent to that country. I quote from the same chart again and I find that aluminum, for instance, jumped from \$39 million to \$57 million; zinc and lead from \$14 million to \$40 million; and other non-ferrous metals from \$34 million to \$55 million. The all-important point, as I see it tonight, is that our markets for farm products in Great Britain have been sharply decreased, and I use this chart again to bear out that statement. Wheat, for instance, went from \$173 million in 1950 down to \$159 million last year. Bacon and hams from \$24.4 million down to \$0.6 million; cheese, from \$15 million down to \$8 million, and so on. Mr. Chairman, Canadian agriculture is facing at this time a very real crisis. It is facing that crisis because of one factor, namely, that we have been losing many of our traditional British markets.

This afternoon the minister pointed out, as he has done many times in the past, that we found alternative markets in the United States. I give him credit for that fact; it was no mean achievement; but, as was repeatedly pointed out this afternoon, that United States market is a vulnerable one. Last year two-thirds of our exports went down to that country.

Now, in the past the United States market has always been vulnerable. We had a very good example a few months ago. We entered the Geneva agreement, or signed the Geneva agreement, hoping that it would have better trade possibilities than the old imperial preferences, and I think probably it will have. But only a few months ago we had a very good indication that the Americans can render the terms of that agreement null and void at any time they wish. The American congress did exactly that when the matter of Canadian cheese was concerned.

While I am on that subject I would ask the minister to explain why the government has been so vacillating in trying to get the Americans to remove that discrimination which is contrary to the treaty. Perhaps the government should consider some retaliatory action.

So I say the American market is a most vulnerable reed upon which to base better Canadian trade. What would happen in the Dominion of Canada if in the next presidential election Senator Taft should become president? I do not for one moment deny that Senator Taft has many sterling qualities. In many ways no doubt he would be a good president; but the fact remains that he is, or at least he has been in the past, a man who has advocated higher tariffs. And if