

it shall not be more than 80 per cent of the lowest advance imposed during the years 1933, 1934 and 1935. Would the minister tell us what the importations were last year, the sources from which they came, and the extent to which the price is increased under section 43 of the Customs Act?

Mr. DUNNING: Imports of fresh mushrooms are not separately classified at present, but they are part of a total of \$10,393 representing imports of mushrooms and truffles, fresh or dried. Of this total, \$5,804, or more than half, came from Hongkong and \$1,300 from the United States. Mushrooms and truffles in cans—that is a different item from the one we are now discussing—value \$43,800, came almost entirely from the United States.

Mr. BENNETT: Some came from France.

Mr. DUNNING: Yes, a small amount from France. With reference to the last part of the question, the value for duty under section 43 on fresh mushrooms has been five cents per pound, effective the year round. The maximum under the treaty will be four cents per pound, which is at present in effect.

Mr. SPENCE: I think it is very unfortunate that this item should be reduced, because a number of people in this country have put a lot of money into mushroom beds. There are miles of mushroom houses in this country which did not exist ten years ago. These people have developed a perfectly safe mushroom, packed in many cases in pound boxes with transparent paper so that anybody can see the contents and nobody need be afraid to use them. I think you are killing a promising industry if you reduce the duty from 27½ to 15 per cent. You should raise it 15 per cent instead of lowering it 12½ per cent.

Mr. STEWART: What is the rate of duty on fresh mushrooms going into the United States?

Mr. DUNNING: Ten cents per pound and 45 per cent ad valorem.

Mr. STEWART: And that remains?

Mr. DUNNING: Yes.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): Can the minister tell us what principle governs the tariff range with reference to mushrooms relative to the item that has been already passed, sweet potatoes? We find a reduction in sweet potatoes to free, a reduction in mushrooms of 50 per cent, and still the duty is maintained on onions, a much cheaper food product. If we are concerned with the consumer and interested in revenue, I suggest that the sweet potato and the mushroom are more or less

[Mr. Bennett]

delicacies so far as many people are concerned. Onions are a staple and a cheaper foodstuff, and yet we find the duty on onions maintained at its full 30 per cent. I have no objection; I admit I am very glad that it is maintained, but as was pointed out by the hon. member for Wentworth (Mr. Lennard) it is the only item in the vegetable list on which the duty is maintained where it has been. It will certainly meet the approval of some prominent onion growers in western Ontario. I know that the minister has a deep concern for producers.

Mr. BENNETT: Consumers.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): But so far as foodstuffs are concerned, onions are more or less of a necessity; sweet potatoes and mushrooms are luxuries, yet the tariff on the latter is substantially reduced while that on onions is maintained. I know that onion producers have made great progress in certain parts of western Ontario, also in parts of my own riding. With reference to the production of soya beans involving 10,000 acres, some hon. members said that that was only a small district in Canada, and probably even our onion producers have a very limited area. I think the largest in western Ontario is in the district of the Minister of Finance's friend, the premier of Ontario. I should like to know why a reduction has been made on practically every other item of from 30 to 15 per cent, while the cheap and necessary onion is maintained at its full 30 per cent.

Mr. DUNNING: One important factor which must always be borne in mind in considering what was done by way of rates is that we always had to give attention during the negotiations to what our treaty arrangements were under the British preference. In the case of onions we had to keep in mind particularly the West Indies and New Zealand.

Mr. BENNETT: They are free.

Mr. DUNNING: I would point out further with respect to mushrooms and truffles that the total imports last year were only \$10,000; half of these came from Hongkong under the intermediate tariff, and Hongkong remains on the intermediate tariff. So far as the comparative values of crops are concerned the onion crop is an important one, as indicated in the figures which I gave. True, its commercial production is confined to a relatively small area in Canada, not nearly so small as the soya bean area mentioned by my hon. friend, but I hardly think it is practical to compare commodities so widely apart, from the standpoint of the producer as soya beans, mushrooms and onions.