

## The Address—Mr. Thatcher

our British market, then by all means let us adopt barter. It is not a question of whether or not we like barter—not a question of that at all. It is a question of whether in order to maintain our British market—indeed, in order to survive economically—we are prepared to adopt that method of trading, if the British ask or force us to do so.

As a matter of fact I found somewhat strange the aversion of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) to state trading. After all, I remember that the first year I was in Ottawa he and his ministers played a leading role in negotiating, between Canada and Great Britain, a wheat agreement under which the Dominion of Canada sold Great Britain 600 million bushels of wheat. If he could do it then, why is he afraid to do something like that at the present time?

I believe there are many Liberals across Canada who are not afraid of that kind of trading agreement. For instance, Premier Byron Johnson of British Columbia only a few weeks ago, in a letter to the *London Times*, openly suggested that British Columbia would be interested in exchanging British Columbia lumber for British steel.

I say a decision in respect of trade is pressing; it cannot wait indefinitely. In my home city of Moose Jaw we have a plant of the Swift Canadian Company in which normally five hundred men are employed. Today approximately two hundred are out of work because Great Britain no longer buys as much meat from us as she did formerly. Then, we have flour mills across Canada. Today many of them are either closed down or have laid men off because Great Britain is not buying as much flour as she did formerly.

I have already mentioned the position of the apple growers.

**Mr. Cruickshank:** In Saskatchewan?

**An hon. Member:** Horse feathers!

**Mr. Cruickshank:** Apple growers in Saskatchewan!

**Mr. Thatcher:** I say that our marketing difficulties are already upon us, whether we wish to admit it or not. It is not enough for parliament to continue to do nothing, to drift, and to hope something will turn up which will give us back our British market.

As Canadians we must understand the position of the British. One cannot help admiring the wonderful economic recovery they have made in the last several years.

Only last Saturday I picked up the *Ottawa Citizen* and noticed that one of the leading editorials dealt with the subject of the British government and trade. The editorial says this:

The truth is that the Labour government has proved a magnificent success. It was elected to

power in one of the most difficult hours of Britain's history. But it has measured up to the grave tasks imposed upon it in a fashion that has won the admiration and reluctant approval even of individuals and publications which ordinarily would be expected to be among its bitterest critics.

A good deal of the success of which the *Citizen* speaks was accomplished by the British through these bilateral trade agreements. Using such trading methods the United Kingdom has achieved a degree of rehabilitation and recovery which is almost incredible. Therefore if today they are somewhat reluctant to relinquish those trading methods, we can scarcely blame them. Nor can we blame the British government entirely if they maintain that the final answer to our trading impasse lies with the parliament of Canada.

After all, from the figures the minister gave us a few moments ago, the fact remains that Great Britain is still buying at least two and a half times more from Canada than we are buying from her. It is one of the main duties of parliament at this session to face up to that situation. While we are looking for a solution we must hope that the British will give us sympathetic and generous understanding, particularly when they remember the billions of dollars we poured into Great Britain in our joint war effort, when they remember the billions of dollars we have given them in loans, credits and gifts since the war, and when they remember the hundreds of millions of dollars which our primary producers have given them through selling our products at sacrifice prices. With those things in mind I feel sure the British will give the people of Canada every consideration.

I would urge the government of Canada immediately to adopt the following steps, in order to improve British-Canadian trade:

1. Call an immediate trade conference between top-level Canadian and British governmental authorities, at either Ottawa or London, to explore the trade situation thoroughly and completely. I believe the Canadian delegation should include representatives from all the major political parties of the House of Commons.

2. The Canadian government at that conference should be prepared to make major tariff concessions to Britain, in order to encourage British imports.

3. The Canadian delegation should express complete willingness to enter bilateral or barter agreements with the British, if they desire it.

4. Import boards should be established immediately in Canada to direct the disposition of British goods in this country, and to encourage British imports generally.