

Agricultural Products Act

Then I went on to show that in spite of what has been said to the contrary—I was not aware that it was my hon. friend who made the statement—to the effect that there has been an increase throughout the years from 1937-38 down to 1947-48 in the production of apples in Britain, the production has gradually increased every year, with ups and downs according to the seasons, until you reach a production which increased from 156,000 tons in 1937-38 to 618,000 tons in 1948, which is the year my hon. friend said he did not have figures for.

I agree that my figures did not come from the statistics branch, but their source is the accounts relating to trade and navigation of the United Kingdom, being the issues of December, 1946, and December, 1948.

Mr. Fulton: The figures I have are at variance with those figures. I obtained my figures from the United Kingdom food mission here in Ottawa to whom I put the question: Is there a drive in the United Kingdom to make yourselves self-sufficient in apples? The answer I got was "No". Then I asked for the figures of the domestic production of dessert and cooking apples, which are the types we formerly supplied to the United Kingdom. In 1939-40, which was the highest post-war year, their domestic production was 453,000 tons. In 1946-47, a post-war year, their production was 360,500 tons, a slight decline. The table of figures runs from 1936-37, when there was a production of 345,300 tons, with slight variations, to the highest figure of 453,000 tons in 1939-40 and 360,500 tons in 1946-47.

The figures of our bureau of statistics show that in 1946 our exports were 1,151,000 barrels. I admit that it is difficult to relate those figures, but I only say that they compare favourably with the pre-war export figures. Right up to 1946 we were exporting to the United Kingdom an approximate equivalent amount every year. Then in 1946-47 we stopped exporting, obviously because of the dollar situation. It was not because of the increase in British production because that production would not increase so suddenly in one year as to cut off imports from Canada.

Mr. Gardiner: I did not say that that was the only reason, but I said it was a reason. It was a reason to the extent of about 50 per cent of the production.

Mr. Fulton: The statement to which I took exception was that it was the 1932 trade agreements which influenced the British to vastly increase their production of dessert and cooking apples.

Mr. Gardiner: So it was.

[Mr. Gardiner.]

Mr. Fulton: That statement is not borne out either by the figures of Canadian exports up to 1946 or by the figures of British production up to 1946. The empire trade agreements, far from being responsible for the loss of the British market, actually increased our exports to the United Kingdom during the years up to 1946 when the dollar situation suddenly cut us off from that market.

Mr. Zaplitny: Has the minister in mind any new contracts that are to be negotiated with Great Britain or any other country under the provisions of this legislation? Are any discussions being contemplated during the current year?

Mr. Gardiner: Discussions are going on with the British constantly with regard to the possibility of new contracts. The one that is under discussion at the moment, more than any other, has to do with cheese.

Mr. Charlton: The minister made a statement that milk production was higher this year than in any previous year.

Mr. Gardiner: I did not say any such thing. If my hon. friend is going to base his argument on something I did not say, I must object. I said the production of 1948 was higher than the production of ten years previous, but I did not say that it was higher than 1947. As a matter of fact, I said that that was no way to make a comparison—one year with another; that you had to take longer periods.

Mr. Charlton: I was just taking the statement of the right hon. minister.

Mr. Gardiner: The hon. member did not take it right.

Mr. Charlton: Is the minister saying that the paper did not quote him correctly?

Mr. Gardiner: I do not know what paper the hon. member is reading from.

Mr. Charlton: This is the *Globe and Mail* of January 6, from which I quoted last night. I quoted from the same speech last night but I did not quote this far. The article reads:

Canada's cheese production now is at its lowest point since 1900, he said. Milk production being down would account for about half the decrease, Mr. Gardiner felt. Another reason advanced, he said, was that producers weren't getting enough for their cheese. Even when net returns were lower, production had not sagged so badly, though.

As the minister has been so certain in his statement that the Liberal government was the only government that could get markets and hold them, I intend to put a few more figures on *Hansard* to show how wrong that statement is. I know the utter futility in trying to argue with the minister on figures,