

*Agricultural Products Act*

Alarming as the present situation is, the immediate future looks blacker still. Recently London concluded an enormous barter deal with Poland whereby the latter country will ship to Britain huge quantities of bacon, timber and eggs. In all these items Canada has a vital interest.

Then it proceeds:

It is high time we learned how we fit into this new policy of barter deals and colonial food development. Literally hundreds of thousands of Canadian jobs, and scores of Canadian communities, are dependent on our overseas trade, not to mention millions of dollars in land, plant and equipment.

**THE ROYAL ASSENT**

A message was delivered by Major C. R. Lamoureux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the right honourable the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, the house went up to the Senate.

And having returned.

Mr. Speaker informed the house that the Deputy of the Governor General had been pleased to give, in His Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

An act to amend the Statute Law.

An act to amend the National Parks Act.

An act to amend the Foreign Exchange Control Act.

An act to amend the Continuation of Transitional Measures Act, 1947.

An act to amend the Canadian Commercial Corporation Act.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at seven-thirty o'clock.

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ACT****EXTENSION OF OPERATION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR**

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Gardiner for the second reading of Bill No. 126, to amend the Agricultural Products Act.

**Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, at adjournment time I had referred to the large agreement entered into by the United Kingdom with Poland. According to Harold Wilson, president of the board of trade, the United Kingdom has entered into bilateral agreements with forty countries during the past year. These are agreements with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands, in respect of ever-increasing amounts of farm products. One hears the argument frequently that the proper policy to pursue in view of the exchange situation between the United Kingdom and

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Canada is one of barter agreements. That argument was answered by Sir Stafford Cripps in an interview with the Canadian Press some weeks ago when he said:

Anglo-Canadian trade was not, and never could be, a matter of bilateral swaps of this commodity against that. He had seen it suggested that this was what we had been doing with foreign countries, when we might have done it with Canada to the greater advantage of us both. These suggestions were misconceived.

And again:

It was a mistake to speak of our bartering steel for timber or capital goods for wheat; what we had done was to include quantities of these items as part only of comprehensive agreements, the object of which was to establish a rough balance of overall trade in sterling.

Some of my hon. friends to the left suggest that the proper course to adopt is that of barter agreements, but the chancellor of the exchequer of the government of Great Britain has indicated that such a plan would not be operative. I have referred in a general way to the difficult situation in which Canadian agriculture finds itself. I stated yesterday that this bill was not a marketing bill and I find support for that statement in the remarks of the Minister of Agriculture to be found on page 1392 of *Hansard*, March 14, 1947. In case there might be some misconception in this regard I would quote the minister's words, as follows:

Hon. members have been discussing whether we should have a marketing bill for all time in the dominion of Canada. I submit that that is not the question which is before the house and that all the discussion in regard to it is entirely out of order. There is no motion before the house with regard to a marketing bill for farm products.

What is before the house is a bill continuing certain powers asked for by the minister. The experience of the last two years has been that, even with the agreements that were in effect between the two countries, state trading has proved to be unsuccessful and a dangerous reef upon which the agriculture of this nation could founder.

We have lost a large trade in agricultural products; it is gone for a number of years because these agreements to which I have referred provide for the delivery of agricultural products for extended periods of time. The Canadian farmer cannot wait until the European market is again available. The time has come when action to secure further markets should be taken in the interests of the Canadian farmer.

Heed should be given to the recommendations made by the hon. member for Calgary East (Mr. Harkness). The time has come when Canada should take the fullest advantage of the enlarged United States markets provided under the Geneva trade agreements. Embargoes and restrictions now in effect,