

Tariff Board

matter that has come to my personal attention. I refer to the way in which facts are ascertained in Canada by other countries. Before proceeding with that phase of the subject, however, I would observe that the emphatic manner in which the Prime Minister presented the case at its different stages almost convinced me that it was a mathematical problem: facts are facts he says and no change of government can alter them. The same dictum was repeated by the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Irvine). But it depends upon the angle from which you look at facts, and upon your preconceived ideas with regard to those facts. As indicated by hon. members, including the hon. gentleman to my left (Mr. Euler), different persons looking into the same facts will disagree in their conclusions. Judges disagree, courts disagree; even the railway commission sometimes disagree among themselves in the judgments based upon the same facts and evidence.

It has come to my attention on more than one occasion how difficult it is to ascertain cost of production even in one's own country. How much more difficult is it then to ascertain the cost of production of any article in another country where you have no status? All you can do is snoop around and get the so called facts as best you may. That is all. This board will not go to the United States and other countries, nor does the United States tariff board come to this country; it is the representatives of the board that visit other places. On one occasion, as I remember, a certain tariff board representative came to Canada to find out the facts regarding the cost of production of wheat, and I noticed at the time that they went into the most favourable places where they could get a low cost of production. It might have been that I was unduly suspicious, but the fact is that they went to such places as would show a low cost of production in Canada that would strengthen their case for reporting a higher duty against us. However that may be, my suspicions have been more than confirmed since then. Imagine getting the cost of producing wheat during these past three years in certain parts of Saskatchewan and comparing that cost with the production of the same article during the three previous years, then coming to a mathematical conclusion as to costs of production on the strength of such varying and unstable facts. Why, one might be a hundred times greater than the other, depending upon the year you took in which to secure the so called "facts" or cost of production. The cost of producing wheat in southern Saskatchewan this year is perhaps

[Mr. Motherwell.]

\$100 per bushel—I have never worked it out but I venture that guess. And compare that with the cost in 1928. What a vast difference there would be. Yet it is variable calculations of that kind by which the Prime Minister argued the cost of production can be arrived at.

There was an unsatisfactory tariff inquiry regarding the cost of producing potatoes in the maritime provinces. I am not familiar with the details of that United States inquiry, but I am familiar with the attempt on the part of the representatives of the American tariff board to obtain the cost of producing milk and cream in Canada. As the committee will recall, it was evident at the outset, in view of the legislation adopted in that country under the Lenroot-Taber bill that the intention was to exclude cream and milk from Canada. That legislation was modified on the representations of the Canadian dairymen, but they persevered in their determination to exclude these articles, and they finally succeeded in practically shutting out our dairy producers. During that discussion I took the matter up with the secretary or the president of the American tariff board—I forget which—protesting against their method of securing costs in Canada. Wherever they went they were looking for certain costs—low costs—which would justify an increase in the tariff in the United States. Is that a mere suspicion, or has it been borne out by the facts? What I am saying in this regard, although I speak from memory, is substantially correct, as the files in the Department of Agriculture will show. I wrote to the secretary of the tariff board at Washington, pointing out that if they wished to obtain correct data and figures with regard to the cost of producing milk and cream, I would put at their disposal the experimental farm with all its records, or any other branch farm in Canada. They never took advantage of that offer. Two or three of their representatives did come to Ottawa some time afterwards but they did not go near our farm officers, nor did they attempt to obtain any figures from us. I was not in Ottawa the day they came, so I cannot speak personally with regard to their visit. I do know, however, that I invited them to come direct to us and get any data at our disposal where the figures would probably be more reliable than any such figures and data as could be secured elsewhere in Canada. But they never came near the experimental farm officers for it.

Now, so far as the United States are concerned, I have never known them to send their emissaries to Canada but for the purpose