

Mr. EULER: It was never done, except by orders in council passed by the government itself.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, that is what I am coming at. The hon. member's memory is very short this afternoon; for those of us who sat on this side of the house then, as we now sit, can never forget the circumstances of that great gathering downstairs, and then in the afternoon hearing in measured tones the condemnation of a parliament that would part with the right to impose tariffs, and what terrible conditions would result if by any chance it was given to any one man to determine what the value for duty purposes should be upon any product, be it natural or otherwise. Who could forget that warning to beware lest principles which were established in centuries gone by might be lost by this action? Does the hon. member forget it?

Mr. EULER: It is perfectly clear.

Mr. BENNETT: I thought it would be. It was clear to all of us that when the government which succeeded came into office it passed an order in council under the provisions of section 43. It applied only to natural products. It was put into operation, and had reference to exactions with respect to vegetables and many kinds of fruits. In some cases discretion was left with the minister; in other cases it was embodied in the orders in council themselves. So the whole responsibility for executive action was accepted by council as being preferable to leaving it to the discretion of a single man to impose a duty. We know about the promises in the press which indicated that these fixed values under section 43 were to disappear, and I remember reading not long since that orders in council had been passed abolishing them. Why was not the public told that instead of abolishing them what they are doing is taking them and saying that they are authorized to maintain them to the extent of 80 per cent of the lowest level. I am perfectly satisfied from what took place this afternoon that when the Minister of National Revenue said he spoke subject to his memory being correct he did not know it was being done. He took the view that it was not being done.

Mr. ILSLEY: My memory was incorrect. I agreed to the order myself on December 27, with respect to certain classes of fruits and vegetables. In order to provide a 20 per cent reduction in the fixed value under the United States trade agreement a new bulletin, No. 4461, was issued by my order on December 27, 1935, amending the previous bulletin, to provide for fixed valuation of three-fifths of a cent per pound.

Mr. BENNETT: And that is for the whole period of twelve months?

Mr. ILSLEY: Just for the time being, I think. They are subject to cancellation at any time.

Mr. BENNETT: But was there any period expressed?—because there is a suggestion in some of the orders in council authorizing the minister to make the order for a twelve months period. Then that order to which the minister has referred is a ministerial order for any length of time.

Mr. ILSLEY: Again I speak subject to correction—

Mr. BENNETT: I thank the minister for his full statement about it, because it is exactly what I thought would happen. It is presumably the exercise of a new discretion for the purpose of giving authority to what I conceive to be an incorrect exercise of power.

Mr. STIRLING: There is no date.

Mr. ILSLEY: I will get the information, but I do not think so.

Mr. STIRLING: Does it apply only to onions, or to other articles?

Mr. ILSLEY: It was applied in regard to all fruit and vegetable valuations in effect on December 31, 1935.

Mr. STIRLING: It qualifies them to the extent of eighty per cent?

Mr. ILSLEY: On all fruits and vegetables on which values were in effect on December 31, 1935.

Mr. DUNNING: I have been saying that.

Mr. SPENCE: Before the item of asparagus passes let me say that I think we have here made another great mistake, because a big industry has been built up in Canada by Canadian people at great cost. Their season lasts only a month or six weeks, and great care of the ground has to be taken. The whole question is as to what is done with the California asparagus coming into this market, and we must decide whether we are willing to put a dumping duty on it and stop the importation before our own is ready for the market. As a rule asparagus comes in and destroys the sale of our own product. No date can be set for valuation, because its growth depends entirely upon the soil and the heat of the sun. The variation is sometimes as great as three or four weeks. We know that in some seasons it comes in three or four weeks earlier than it does in others. Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, that in the business world we wish to God that the minister's wings were clipped so far as