

*The Address—Mr. Fulton*

Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) read his speeches over again. If they had been any answer to the situation, that would have been bad enough, but when they are not, when their only purpose is to further confuse the situation, that is confusion worse confounded.

The minister's whole position that the export of agricultural commodities to the United Kingdom is continuing at a satisfactory level is contradicted, not only by others of his statements but by the facts as well as by other members of the cabinet. We have the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) taking a very serious view of our declining trade with Great Britain. When the Minister of Finance was presenting his budget to the house last March he made the definite statement that the Canadian authorities had made official representations to the United Kingdom authorities against the barter deals being entered into between that country and other countries, some being behind the iron curtain. I feel that this situation is serious enough to warrant us in asking the government and the minister to let us know what representations were made, to whom they were made and the results of those representations.

**Mr. Fleming:** They also warrant the minister's attention.

**Mr. Howe:** Can't you make a speech without us? It is not very interesting.

**Mr. Fulton:** I sometimes think the country could be run without you. I suppose a speech in the house could be made without the minister's attention.

**Mr. Abbott:** The only trouble is that my hon. friend makes too many speeches and too dull.

**Mr. Fulton:** That is typical of the attitude taken by the government. They think that all speeches made by the opposition are too many. They would like to run the country without any opposition at all but it will be some time before they do that. However, let us not become heated. It did so happen that I was dealing with some statements made by the minister at the time he presented his budget last spring and I should like to quote now from a press report of his remarks as follows:

The government of Canada has made repeated requests at the very highest level that authorities in the United Kingdom and other commonwealth countries do all that they can to take advantage of the favourable opportunities which Canada has offered for their exports.

The Canadian government has also made it clear that it does not look with favour on purchasing arrangements or bilateral trade deals which tend to divert away from Canada either British or colonial products which otherwise could be sent here,—

I was hoping, in view of the somewhat similar statement made some time ago by the Minister of Agriculture, that the Minister of Finance would tell us to whom the representations were made and what have been the results. It is stated here that the representations were made on the official level. I refer to that as indicating that at least one or two ministers, for a short while at any rate, recognized the fact that our trade situation vis-à-vis the United Kingdom and the sterling area is in a serious position.

But we find the Minister of Agriculture at this time departing from or contradicting the statements which he made formerly that we could not dispose of Canadian agricultural production because of the situation with respect to sterling trade and saying that we have no surplus production to dispose of. The Minister of Agriculture made a statement, as reported on page 288 of *Hansard* of February 27, that the only surplus we have now is cheese and he said, "We are carrying that right now".

I ask the Minister of Agriculture: If there are no surpluses why did the British Columbia apple growers have to give away a million boxes of apples to the United Kingdom? The minister is contradicted in connection with this matter, not only by his previous statements but by the facts. He is contradicted in this matter as he is in so many other matters. For instance, we all recall his words during the last year or two when this subject was being discussed when he said that there was no market for Canadian apples in the United Kingdom. Not only did he say that the United Kingdom cannot buy Canadian apples; he said that the United Kingdom is now producing all the apples it needs for its own domestic consumption.

He painted a picture of millions of apple trees in England groaning with apples, their branches loaded down to the ground. If that was the fact why did the British government accept so gladly and so readily the gift of a million boxes of surplus Canadian apples, and incidentally turn around, as I have heard, and market them in their domestic market at a substantial profit? We find the Minister of Agriculture making this statement on June 6 in the election campaign at Spy Hill, Saskatchewan.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be interesting if the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) and the Minister of Trade and Commerce would let the house in on this little tête-à-tête they are having. It seems to be very interesting or amusing. They are certainly gesticulating wildly at each other. I hope it does not indicate another split in the cabinet. However, the ministers