

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, and the hon. gentleman said that it would be a thousand to one in favour of the farmer.

Mr. DUNNING: Comparing the maintenance of the present position of the article—free—with putting a duty on it.

Mr. BENNETT: I am pointing out that the very moment, by increasing importations, you substitute some other feed for the feeds now used, that very moment you lessen the consumption of the Canadian grain product; that is all. I have listened many times in this house to the case made in connection with this question, and notably the strong demand from western Canada with respect to barley. Take, for instance, any kind of feed, such as fox food, which the hon. gentleman regarded as important; but perhaps I should not deal with that; the item has already carried. I say, however, that to the extent you replace grain, whether barley, wheat, oats, rye or corn, which is used for feeding purposes on the farm, with an imported product, whether soya bean meal or Indian corn from some other country, to that extent you lessen the possibility of the Canadian farmer being able to continue making a profit on his farming.

Mr. DUNNING: I defer to my right hon. friend's legal opinion at any time—

Mr. BENNETT: Not any opinion of mine on farming.

Mr. DUNNING: —but having had some experience in feeding stock, I beg to differ with him on the practical question of feeding and to tell him that if to-day I were finishing fat stock and were at the same time growing wheat, oats, barley and the other normal cereal products of the west, for results in the form of beef attained quickly I should want to inject if I could some soya bean element into the feed which I was giving the stock. And I should not think I was doing myself any harm as a grower of wheat, oats, barley and flax because I had sense enough to inject a quantity of another element, which I could not grow on my farm, for the purpose of producing far quicker results in the form of beef. That is a matter of practical feeding.

Mr. WOOD: The remarks of the leader of the opposition have been quite interesting to me. I appreciate his legal qualifications and his ability to argue and to make a speech. But I do not consider him an authority on feeding cattle. The point which the minister mentioned is a very important one; there is such a thing as a balanced ration. We have had considerable experience in Ontario in connection with the barley propaganda and I will tell the committee frankly what my views are

on this question. When I get into conversation with any of my neighbours over the barnyard fence and am told that the government is recommending that the farmers go into hog production or barley production or some other line, I generally reply that if there is propaganda to encourage a particular form of production the farmers will be well advised to turn round and go the other way. That has been my experience. When the government tries to force production along any particular line, the general result is overproduction with consequent chaos in the industry. When you feed cattle you want more than barley and oats. As the Minister of Finance has said, if you are to be a successful stockman you must balance your ration with proteins. I am quite satisfied that the government is adopting the right course, because this by-product of soya beans is very valuable, containing about forty-four per cent protein, whereas oil-cake meal, which is a byproduct of flaxseed, has a protein element of thirty-five per cent, and the very best product of cottonseed meal contains about forty per cent. In proportion to value as a feed, soya beans at the present market price are by all means the cheapest product, so that if you increase the price to one class of farmer you are penalizing another group of farmers. We are not asking for protection for soya beans or anything else. In this dominion we have cheap lands and we have a resourceful people sprung from the old pioneer stock, people who know how to do things. We believe that the principle of merit should be recognized in society, whether in politics or in any other calling; and if we can convince industry that it is in the best interests not only of the consuming public at large but of industry itself to market reasonable products and not to inflict high prices on the public, then we shall have progress and a condition of affairs which will make for a more equal distribution of the wealth of the country and the satisfaction of life. I commend the minister for the way in which he is trying to pilot this legislation through. We as farmers are not asking for any particular privilege; all we want is a square deal. We say: Get off our backs and we will raise soya beans or wheat or anything else without protection. But we cannot continue to carry on our backs the load of exotic industry and our own load as well.

Mr. MacNICOL: Does the hon. gentleman object to western farmers receiving a bonus on wheat?

Mr. WOOD: Let me be frank with the hon. gentleman; he has asked a plain question and I will give a plain answer. I absolutely refuse