

Supply—Trade and Commerce

The Deputy Chairman: I would point out that item 429 deals with exhibitions generally and item 430 with the Canadian international trade fair.

Mr. Charlton: Has the minister the most recent figures of trade with the United Kingdom and the United States, divided as between industrial and agricultural products?

Mr. Howe: The cumulative figures January to May are as follows:

United States	
Exports	\$736,900,000
Imports	817,100,000
Adverse trade balance, \$80.2 million.	
United Kingdom	
Exports	\$184,700,000
Imports	149,400,000
Favourable trade balance	35,300,000
Remainder sterling area	
	million
Exports	\$81.8
Imports	73.5
Favourable trade balance	8.3

Mr. Charlton: Could the minister divide those figures as between agricultural and industrial production?

Mr. Howe: It can be done, but I have not the figures with me. They have just been published and the breakdown has not been prepared although I may have it before the evening is over.

Mr. Higgins: On the minister's return from England a little while ago he announced that he had had talks with respect to the sale of iron ore and expected that the results would be made known shortly. Can he enlighten the committee on that matter? In the past two or three days the Minister of Fisheries announced that the Department of Trade and Commerce was negotiating for new markets for salt codfish. Can the minister enlighten us on that matter as well?

Mr. Howe: It is perhaps a day or two early for me to be able to set my hon. friend's mind completely at ease, but as a result of the talks I had while in England, and subsequent talks that are now current in England, before the week ends I hope to be able to announce a sale of 300,000 tons of iron ore to the United Kingdom for delivery in 1950 coupled with 700,000 tons of iron ore for delivery in 1951.

Mr. Higgins: Great news.

Mr. Howe: Perhaps my hon. friend can claim credit for that.

Mr. Fraser: That is very kind of you.

Mr. Howe: So far as fish is concerned, I am not ready to make an announcement.

Those talks are not finished, but there again I think there will be good news before the week is out.

Mr. Herridge: I should like to ask the minister whether he discussed the question of the sale of Canadian apples in the United Kingdom market while he was over there.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): They are not food.

Mr. Howe: That subject was very thoroughly discussed while I was in England, and it is being discussed at the moment. The indications are quite hopeful.

Mr. Fulford: I should like to ask the minister whether any progress has been made in improving our trading position with the British West Indies.

Mr. Howe: Canadian trade with the British West Indies was the subject of a great deal of discussion when I was in England, and is the main topic of discussion in the trade talks that are now current. There again these estimates are being discussed about two or three days too soon. I am sure that the recent discussions will open the British West Indies to Canadian produce to a considerable extent. Before the end of the week I hope to make an announcement that will be very helpful to Canadian industry and Canadian agriculture.

Mr. Fulford: That is most gratifying. Since I spoke on the subject on April 24 in the budget debate, I have received letters from firms in Canada and the British West Indies. I have received newspaper clippings from the British West Indies and even a letter from a British member of parliament. I had no idea it was such a live issue. I realize that the West Indies are not satisfied with the present condition. Last week I had occasion to speak to members of the commonwealth press conference, editors and owners of various newspapers, and they were all of the opinion that a solution must be found, that the West Indies wanted further trade. I know that what the minister has just said will be gratifying not only to Canadians but to all the colonies comprising the British West Indies.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): The minister seems to have such a general knowledge of all subjects dealing with trade that I am sure he will be able to answer the question I am going to ask, although I am not certain that it comes directly within his department. My question has to do with the progress that has been made in the development of the great discoveries of iron ore in the territory adjacent to the border of Labrador and Quebec. I understand the difficulties there are in