

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

On behalf of the people of Saskatchewan I am asking that this project be proceeded with as a national undertaking, and that the promise recorded in the Regina *Leader-Post* of April 21, 1949, be carried into effect.

There is one other matter I should like to discuss which particularly affects western Canada; I refer to the Hudson Bay railway. Even when our farmers are not getting the highest prices for their product, they can get a greater return if the costs of production are kept down. I should like to see hon. members from Alberta and Manitoba join with us from Saskatchewan in demanding a greater utilization of this railroad and the facilities at Churchill. We from Saskatchewan want to build up a two-way traffic on the Hudson Bay route through Churchill, and we do not want to see it thwarted by any off-the-record policy of top-flight individuals in Ottawa, or by the Department of Trade and Commerce. We want to see an opportunity given to this railway and to the facilities at Churchill to assist the western farmer. This has been requested for many years. The facilities are there, but to all intents and purposes they are not used.

I now come to the speech delivered yesterday by the Minister of Agriculture. I have a few quotations here; indeed, if I were to gather them all up I would have an assortment of contradictory statements that would establish anything, any place, any time. Yesterday my right hon. friend spoke of the 1930's. That is the old stock argument of my hon. friends opposite. They talk about the 1930's and say that the Conservatives were responsible for the low agricultural prices. That is what they say, and my hon. friend was back at it yesterday. It is not long ago, to be exact on January 19, that the right hon. gentleman made a statement in Ottawa at a press conference. He was referring to the action of the United States in dumping farm products on the market, and I quote:

It certainly can affect the Canadian export market for farm products.

The United States policy is not new, it has been going on since the 1930's. In 1932, when the United States first started paying its producers higher prices than they could obtain on the market, the United States government started selling grains at below cost.

That's what caused our wheat to go down to 36 cents a bushel.

Mr. Gardiner: The Ottawa agreements were in effect in 1932.

Mr. Diefenbaker: We have that statement vouchsafed by the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Gardiner: They understood what I said.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is true enough. We had a statement yesterday, and a different one

on January 19. At that time the minister said that the cause of the fall in wheat prices during the thirties was the action of the United States—I think that bears repetition—when all through the years we in this party have been held responsible for the fall of wheat prices that had fallen all over the world.

When the minister spoke yesterday he drew a picture that was optimistic in the extreme. What are the facts? So far as the United Kingdom is concerned, sales to that country in January, 1950, which have fluctuated in recent months, fell by \$7,205,000 to \$48,608,000. The total value of exports to all commonwealth countries, including the United Kingdom, was \$62,336,000 as against \$88,706,000 a year ago, according to statistics issued by the Department of Trade and Commerce. That gives the picture.

As I listened yesterday to the minister I wondered if this was the same minister who during the campaign had drawn such optimistic pictures of trade. Yesterday the minister read from his radio address of May 28, 1949. It was a masterpiece. In order to keep the record clear I am going to refer to some of the other speeches made during that campaign. When speaking yesterday, why did he not tell the farmers what their markets will be after 1950, and in 1951 and 1952? Why did he not tell the Canadian people how much sale there will be for wheat outside of the international wheat agreement? Why did he not answer the question that has been asked him so often as to what he meant when he spoke in Brantford, Ontario, on December 6? In an address to the board of trade of that city on that date he is reported to have said:

There is a very decided official effort to drive wheat and several Canadian food products from the British market.

Why not tell who these people are? What officials in Great Britain are interfering, for that is what it amounts to, with commonwealth trade with that country whose market is of such great importance to Canada?

Mr. Gardiner: It does not mean that but I must not say anything.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister himself spoke of the British market when he addressed the food and agricultural organization in Washington.

Mr. Gardiner: It is not "officials"; it is "official".

Mr. Diefenbaker: At that time he said:

I hope that nothing in the report will suggest that the United States should not follow the conservation measures which have been outlined by the delegate from that country. That, together with the removal of the embargo on the export of wheat