

The Address—Mr. Stephenson

government came into power in 1935? The reason is that we had just come through the greatest depression the world has ever known, a world-wide depression. By 1933 or 1934 markets had started to move upward, and when the government came into power in 1935 they were able to enjoy the returning markets. That was the reason there was an increase at that time. During the war we find that the market was expanded owing to the great demand for the goods that were necessary for war. After the war was over those countries that had been devastated by it were not in a position to produce the goods they needed. Canada was fortunate enough not to be touched by the war, and we were in a position to supply what was needed. All the government had to do was to shovel the goods into the market. In many cases they were sold at less than the world market price. It is not hard to go out and sell goods on the market at less than the world market price. If I were a salesman I could easily go out and sell an article for less than the other fellow was asking for it. That is hardly salesmanship, and it requires no great effort. That is exactly what happened; that is why this government had these expanding markets and why Canada enjoyed those exports. But now we find a different position. These other countries are getting back into production and are competing in the world markets, and as a result we are losing them.

Mr. Gardiner: Oh, no.

Mr. Stephenson: Oh, yes, we are. We cannot get the markets, that is all.

Mr. Gardiner: What unsold surpluses have we?

Mr. Stephenson: If the minister will not admit that, let us see what is actually happening; let us take a few of the statements that have been made. Here is one that appeared in the press a short time ago:

Under the agreement with the Netherlands, the United Kingdom will obtain sorely needed supplies of bacon and eggs to compensate in part for reduced purchases of these foods from Canada.

Mr. Gardiner: That is because we ate them all ourselves, or sent them to the United States.

Mr. Stephenson: Here is something that has actually happened. Between 1939 and 1949 we negotiated over 125 contracts with the United Kingdom for foodstuffs, and had as many as 22 in force in one year. Today we have four: wheat, covering 160 million bushels at \$2; cheese, covering fifty million pounds at 30 cents a pound, an amount less than the total shipments of cheese in any single year during the past thirty years; a contract for 160 million pounds of bacon at

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\$36, grade A Wiltshire, f.o.b. Canadian sea-port, the lowest bacon contract we have had in the past ten years. This portrays a situation of such gravity that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) felt it necessary at the last dominion-provincial agricultural conference to state that the Canadian government can no longer assure farmers of a market in Britain for all the hogs we can produce.

Mr. Gardiner: All they produced were sold.

Mr. Stephenson: If the minister wants to make a speech he may do so later.

Mr. Grant: Leave him alone and let him do it.

Mr. Stephenson: He would like to be left alone, I know. Then our contract this year for 46 million dozen eggs represents a reduction of 62 per cent from last year. It is said that the reason for this situation is the shortage of dollars in the United Kingdom. We will admit that this has been an important factor, but I still say this government has been sitting on the doorstep, paying hardly any attention to export markets, and as a result we have lost them. Are they going to continue to just sit here and wait for these people to come and knock on our door?

Mr. Cruickshank: Let us blast our way in.

Mr. Stephenson: I am afraid I forgot to include the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank) in the list of people I should congratulate. May I congratulate him now on these great, statesmanlike interjections he makes in this House of Commons. I am sure his people back home read them with a great deal of interest.

Many people have thought that we might be losing these markets because other countries are selling their goods to Britain at lower prices. I want to correct that impression. In the latest issue of *Foreign Trade*, which came to our desks just the other day, I find this statement:

With the exception of condensed milk, the average values, declared for customs purposes, of the principal foodstuffs obtained from Canada were lower than the values of similar products imported by the United Kingdom from other countries. As indicated in the table below, the average value for Canadian wheat in 1948 was £1 per hundredweight, whereas that for wheat from other sources of supply was £1.5 per hundredweight. The average value for bacon from Canada was £10 per hundredweight compared with £11.4 per hundredweight for bacon from other countries.

The article goes on to give a whole list of items, and in each case the prices paid to other countries are higher than those paid to Canada. So it is hard to understand why we have not been able to retain those markets. It might be interesting to have this