

that they cannot have enough to eat; we have had enough of that resourcefulness which a man must exercise to pay rent, light, fuel and food bills living in a town and receiving a relief wage of \$15 per month for himself and his wife. We have had enough of that, we want to get away from it.

The principal interest in this agreement, so far as that portion of British Columbia with which I am most familiar, Vancouver island and the lower mainland is concerned, centres around the lumber, fish and farm items. As far as butter is concerned, the British government has agreed to put a duty of fifteen shillings per hundredweight on butter imported from foreign countries. This is equivalent to about three cents per pound or ten per cent. That is not an unreasonable preference, but it is largely nullified by the fact that the same privilege is given to New Zealand and Australia. They, being members of the empire, receive the same advantages. But these countries are our principal competitors and it will be practically impossible for us to meet the competition of New Zealand and to some extent, that of Australia. I do not blame the government for this; it is not responsible altogether for the situation, but the fact remains that the preference has been rendered almost useless.

The question of eggs is very important to British Columbia. The British government is imposing a duty on eggs from foreign countries ranging from one shilling to one shilling nine pence per great hundred. In our figures that is equivalent to about two to three cents per dozen or possibly eight or ten per cent. Because of our distance from the United Kingdom we can compete only with storage eggs. But there again we run up against a 25 per cent disadvantage in the fact that Denmark and Holland, our real competitors, are close at home, able to send in fresh eggs, and their currency conforms to the British currency, consequently they have a preference of 25 per cent over us and we have a preference of only 10 per cent over them.

There is a proverb which says: "Whilst the grass is growing, the horse may die." That is what is taking place in British Columbia to a very considerable extent. Hundreds and hundreds of poultrymen have been squeezed out of business, absolutely ruined, not for lack of this tariff, but because the government of the day, for the last two years—and it is more than two years now—have persistently refused to consider the application of the farmers of British Columbia in connection with their appeal from the railway board which ruled that we must pay more than double the freight rate on wheat from

the prairies, as compared with the rate for export. They have not even given us the advantage which would accrue to some extent if they had dealt with it and rejected it, in which case we might have taken up another line of appeal. They have, however, done absolutely nothing, thereby allowing wheat to come from the prairies at such a rate that it can be exported to China and the eggs produced thereby shipped to Vancouver cheaper than the wheat can be brought from the prairies to the poultrymen in British Columbia.

Mr. FRASER (Cariboo): Did those conditions not apply under the former government?

Mr. NEILL: Not for two years; and in any case two blacks do not make a white. Perhaps hon. gentlemen opposite are where they are today partly because the Liberal government neglected the matter to some extent, but not to the extent of two years. If the hon. gentleman cannot raise a better argument than that, he had better change to the other side of the house. We are not talking of the sins of the past; we are talking about the sins of the present administration. The amending of that condition would be of more use than this illusory preference which sounds pretty good but is really of very little value.

The two lines from which the districts that I have indicated in British Columbia hope to derive benefit, are fish and lumber. In both those instances, however, we have been singularly unfortunate. As regards lumber we were led to believe we were to get a preference of 20 per cent. I hold in my hand an editorial from a Conservative paper in British Columbia. I shall not read the whole of it, but this is the sense of it. Premier Tolmie understood that fish and lumber were to get a 20 per cent preference, but when he heard that Britain refused to give more than 10 per cent because Canada held back on textiles, he wired to Ottawa emphatically protesting against two basic industries in the west being sacrificed on account of secondary industries in the east. So much to the credit of Premier Tolmie. In these days he is entitled to all the credit he can get and I give it to him freely and without sarcasm. The preference we get is this: the British government have put a duty of 10, 15 and 20 per cent on lumber imported from foreign countries. The only item that amounts to anything is the first one: planks, deals and flooring, 10 per cent. The other items are small in extent. One article on which we receive no preference

[Mr. Neill.]