

there has been a sacrifice of the interests of the fruit and vegetable growers in Canada. There has been nothing of the kind. The margins are so great that there is room for the exercise of governmental discretion within the maximum, but certainly if the maximum were imposed the protection would be adequate.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): Before this item carries I should like to thank the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Rowe) for urging the government to reduce these dumping duties or to abolish them entirely at the present time, when the item of asparagus is before the committee. I wish also to thank the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Hsley) for giving us these figures, showing the tremendous burden that is being borne by those who have to buy and consume these goods.

Mr. SPENCE: You do not need asparagus on the prairies. You can grow it there and it will cost you nothing.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): Surely. We can do a lot of things there, but why should we waste a dollar's worth of time in producing twenty-five cents worth, when we can use the same time to produce a dollar and a half's worth of wealth? Would it not be foolish for parliament to compel us to squander our efforts in doing a thing like that? The point I am making is that I wish to assure my hon. friends that the people of this country are intelligent enough, if they are left free, to use their time and energy to the best advantage.

Mr. MacNICOL: Talk about asparagus.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. member who has the floor that he must confine his remarks to asparagus.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I was dealing with asparagus and pointing out that under the old regulations there were imposed on invoices, duty and taxes of 302.3 per cent which has now been reduced, including duty and taxes on invoices, to 202 per cent.

It would be folly to compel the people of western Canada, as my hon. friend from Parkdale (Mr. Spence) suggested, to grow asparagus when they ought to be using their time and energy and the resources of the climate they have at their disposition. My hon. friend told us that his vegetable growers, who are protected by a duty and tax running up to 320 per cent, are now on relief. I am glad he is willing to help us abolish that condition by enabling us to buy those vegetables and sell them to consumers in

other parts of Canada at a much smaller price. In connection with the sale of asparagus I find many resolutions like this:

That the climatic and geographical situation of the prairie provinces creates a sufficient natural protection for Canadian producers of fruits and vegetables—

Including asparagus.

—and any further protection constitutes an unwarranted burden on our consumers.

It further recommends:

That the prairie provinces be constituted a zone where dump and seasonal tariff duties in fruits and vegetables should not apply.

I want at this moment to support the plea by the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Ross) that there should be a separation of tariff zones or a differential between tariff zones in Canada, and that that area in which sufficient protection is afforded by climatic, freight and other conditions to the fruit growers, should be left free, should not be included.

I find that last year fixed valuations and dumping duties were applied on asparagus from April 25 to July 9. At that time supplies of asparagus from British Columbia were not available, and I do not think they were going out from Ontario. Why, then, should the people of that section of the west be penalized between April 25 and July 9? Last year asparagus was available in British Columbia from May 2 to June 10, or for just more than one month, so the dumping duty was applied to that section of the country for a period of thirty-six days during which no adequate supplies were available, and anyone who wanted to buy asparagus at that time had to pay that protection and tax amounting to 320 per cent, which has been reduced now to 202 per cent including the dumping duties, the taxes and the other charges. I ask you, Mr. Chairman, and through you this committee if it is reasonable to say to the people of a large section of Canada that they either must do without the vegetables, asparagus if you like—I am keeping to the one item—or that they must pay a protection of 320 per cent to the people who are producing or trying to produce it and who, as my hon. friend has said, are almost on relief.

Mr. GRAYDON: I should like to say just a word in reply to the hon. member for Melfort and the hon. member for Moose Jaw. I believe they are presupposing—and I think they are trying to be fair—that because there is a considerable tariff protection for fruits and vegetables, particularly asparagus, at certain seasons of the year, the price they must