

ment two or three years ago and persuaded that government to form what they called a Committee of Internal Direction, or something of that kind. To this committee they gave power to handle all the fruits and vegetables grown in that province. This was not a voluntary pool but a compulsory arrangement under which every grower was forced to sell his products through that concern at a price named by them, to the party named by them and at a time named by them. If he dared sell his products anywhere else or in any other way he could be taken into court and fined. This matter came to light in an investigation which was conducted before the tariff board, and the observations of the chairman of that board are well worth remembering. I am sorry I have not them with me but I will give them to the house from memory. He said that this was the most remarkable thing that had ever come to his notice; it was not voluntary co-operation but an attempt on the part of the people of one province to control the supplies of the people in the prairie provinces, and the strange thing about it was that the people in the prairie provinces were powerless to help themselves.

That organization was set up, and one of the first things they did was to fix the price of onions at \$40 per ton. With freight and handling charges added, that brought the price of onions on the prairies to the point where we thought we could buy them cheaper elsewhere, so we bought our onions in Ontario and left British Columbia holding the bag, so to speak. Then what happened? Last winter these people came to Ottawa from British Columbia to hold a conference with the fruit and vegetable growers of the east, and put up this proposition: They said, "You form a committee similar to ours and you control the supplies in the east as we control them in the west. Then we will get the government to shut out all supplies from the south and we will have the people of the prairie provinces in the hollow of our hands." Parliament was sitting at the time. We who are supposed to fix the tariffs of this country were in session here, and these gentlemen over in the Chateau Laurier drew up a list of values which were to be the values for duty and which would fix the duty on fruits and vegetables for the coming season, in utter contempt of parliament. That was the aim of the fruit and vegetable growers in British Columbia; that is the aim of the people here who are clamouring for higher duties on fruits and vegetables. They want to shut out supplies from all sources but their own; they want to form a monopoly

and hold the people of the prairie provinces in the hollow of their hands. Why, in a good many cases they cannot even supply our requirements; they cannot supply more than one-tenth of the prairie market for peaches, yet they would have us pay a duty of 80 per cent on imported peaches in order that they might extract an exorbitant price for that one-tenth of our requirements which they can supply.

When I first came to this house three years ago the thing that struck me most in the debates was the solicitude of hon. gentlemen opposite for the farmers. Bankers, professional men, manufacturers, and business men generally would get up and constantly urge protection. Protection for what? They urged protection for the farmer, and as I listened to those debates the question kept recurring to my mind, "What have we done to be so much loved? Why do our friends in these other professions seem so anxious all of a sudden for the welfare of the farmer, when we had always considered that they had no interest in the farmer at all except as a lamb to be sheared?"

Mr. GEARY: Did you expect us to be hostile?

Mr. YOUNG (Weyburn): No, but I expected you to tell us what was really in your minds. However, here was the position: After the close of the war a great wave of high protectionist sentiment swept over the world. That wave did not make much headway in Canada, and the principal reason was that the farmers of Canada, from coast to coast, were a unit in opposing it. Those in Canada who were interested in high protection, some because they honestly believed it would be good for the country and others because they believed it would be good for their own pockets, realized that they could never force the government to increase the tariffs in this country unless they first succeeded in dividing the farmers on the issue. So these were the tactics they adopted: They tried to pick out those isolated groups of farmers specializing in certain commodities and persuade them that if they would accept protection on their particular commodity they would benefit at the expense of the rest of the community. We must admit that they have met with some degree of success, because to-day we find poultry producers asking for higher duties on eggs; we find fruit and vegetable growers asking for higher duties on fruits and vegetables which will exclude these articles; we find dairymen asking for higher protection on dairy products, and so on. They have persuaded these farmers that