

The Address—Mr. Fulton

dominion bureau of statistics' own figures, that the trend set in and was experienced at its most violent pace in the last two years of the King government in 1928 to 1930. It was not until the Bennett government did something about it in 1932, by summoning the imperial economic conference, that the trend was halted and Canada's trade finally began a long, slow uphill climb toward recovery from the situation that the Liberal government had brought about.

Mr. Ferrie: Nineteen-cent wheat.

Mr. Fulton: If the hon. members of the Liberal party want to interrupt me I would ask them to do so one at a time so that I can deal with them.

Mr. Ferrie: All right; what about 19-cent wheat?

Mr. Fulton: The 19-cent wheat that my hon. friend is so interested in was explained in the quotation read by the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) this afternoon, in which the present Minister of Agriculture, a leading figure of your own party, explained that the fall in the price of Canadian wheat was due to the United States policy, and that trend started in the years 1928 to 1930. If my hon. friend will contain his patience a little longer I shall give him the figures which substantiate my position.

Mr. Ferrie: Give me the money that they took out of my pocket and I will be happy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Fulford): Order.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I want to be the first to congratulate you on being able to exercise your authority now. I am looking to my left.

Mr. Ferrie: Thanks a lot.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, the press is full of information today which supports—although the statement is so frequently denied by the ministers of the government—the assertion that Canada is losing her overseas markets. I hold in my hand a quotation from the *Toronto Star*, dated February 15, 1950, which reads:

Canada fails to close Trade Gaps with U.S., Britain
in Big Year

Although Canada's foreign trade, a key factor in the nation's prosperity, remained high last year, there were several "low pressure" areas which may mean rough weather ahead.

They were dealing with 1949 when the trend had already become evident. The report goes on:

The year-end report of the dominion bureau of statistics reveals Canada is no farther ahead today in solving the currency exchange problem than she was a year ago.

It's generally agreed that the long-range solution, as far as Canada is concerned, is for her to buy more from Britain and to sell more to the U.S. Both of these things she failed to do in any substantial measure in the twelve months ending last December, the report showed.

Then we have the dominion bureau of statistics release, to which reference has been made on one or two occasions previously, covering the first month of 1950, coming to hand at the very time that this particular question is being discussed, coming to hand at the very time that the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Trade and Commerce and others are saying that to talk of Canada losing her overseas markets is nonsense. It is a pity that the ministers do not have time to read the publications of their own departments, or if they do read them they do not seem to have that confidence in their accuracy which we on this side of the house have.

This release shows that our exports to the United Kingdom in the month of January as compared with the month of January, 1949, fell by \$7 million.

Mr. Howe: My hon. friend knows the reason. He knows that the railroads in British Columbia, which carry our exports to seaboard in the winter months, were blocked.

Mr. Fulton: They were not blocked during the whole month of January.

Mr. Howe: They were blocked for a good part of it. The drop in wheat shipments accounts for nearly all of the deficit.

Mr. Fulton: It is comforting to hear the minister make that explanation for the first time, but it does not explain the tendency which was so evident during the preceding months of 1949.

Mr. Howe: My hon. friend is aware—

Mr. Fulton: Were the railroads closed all during 1949?

Mr. Howe: During 1949 exports dropped by exactly 2 per cent, and that was due to the drop in prices in the last half of the year. If that is a calamity in trade, then I hope we shall have no more serious ones.

Mr. Argue: By volume?

Mr. Howe: By dollars.

Mr. Fulton: I am glad to hear that the Minister of Trade and Commerce is consistent in his statement now and those which he made before the election. He might pass a little of his consistency on to the Minister of Agriculture, who told us that—