

Supply—Trade and Commerce

been able to produce, and I have great confidence that we can do so in the future. I do not know just what the process would be if we were to tie ourselves to one market and take the price conditions of that market. Are we going to close out more profitable and more accessible markets? Is this country prepared as a matter of policy to say that we are going to supply England in any event and that any price that England is willing to pay will be the price for Canadian producers? Is that the policy my hon. friends are advocating?

Mr. Charlton: That is absolute nonsense.

Mr. Howe: How do we get beef into England when they are buying it at 14 cents a pound on the boat?

Mr. Charlton: Would the minister permit one question?

Mr. Howe: Yes.

Mr. Charlton: What happened to the promise made during the war years that if the farmers of Canada would sell at a lesser price than the world price the government would protect them with respect to future markets in Great Britain and make up the difference over and above the price the farmers had to take?

Mr. Howe: Is that the policy for which my hon. friend is asking?

Mr. Charlton: That was the policy promised by this government in the war years.

Mr. Sinclair: What page?

Mr. Howe: What page? My hon. friend has distorted the export picture so consistently that he has no idea of the policy of the government or the position of the farmers under the government policy.

Mr. Sinclair: He just has no ideas.

An hon. Member: Nothing up top.

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Howe: As I say, the situation is that our exports for this year will be a record for any year in peacetime history, and I am referring to our exports of everything that Canada exports. It is true we have lost a certain market for certain products because of the inability of that country to afford to buy our products. Great Britain would like very much to buy Canadian canned salmon. It is popular but it is a higher priced food than other foods they are buying. It is considerably higher in price than the meat they are buying from Australia. They have said to us that they are sorry that they cannot afford our salmon. They may change their minds. That door has not been closed. That

is the position today and it is purely on the basis of price. They just cannot afford that expensive food.

Mr. Charlton: We have still lost it though.

Mr. Howe: Well, lost—what does my hon. friend think we are going to do with the salmon, just leave it in the ocean or throw it away? We will sell it somewhere where they can afford to buy canned salmon.

Mr. Charlton: I said we had lost the market. You said we had not. Now you agree that we have.

Mr. Howe: I did not say we had lost the market. I said the situation in Britain was such that they could not afford to buy canned salmon this year. So far as cheese is concerned, they trifled with our small amount of Canadian cheese until the price has got too high for them. They do not want any more Canadian cheese at the moment.

Mr. Ferrie: Tory policy.

Mr. Charlton: Yet we import cheese from New Zealand.

Mr. Howe: Certainly we import. We are a trading nation. Will my hon. friend just subsidize? He must be sure he is wrong because he is so persistent in throwing my statement off balance. Let us not emphasize the effect of the foot-and-mouth disease, which it will take time to correct, but will my hon. friend admit that we have sold everything this country has produced surplus to domestic requirements over the past year, and at the best prices available in the world? Perhaps he will mention something we have not sold.

An hon. Member: Apples.

Mr. Howe: We sold the apple crop last year and sold it at a good price.

Mr. Charlton: There was a surplus of cheese last year and the foot-and-mouth disease had nothing to do with that.

Mr. Howe: That was all in the province of Ontario. The marketing of cheese was in the hands of the province of Ontario. A price of 36 cents a pound for cheese was set by the cheese co-operative and it was not possible to sell cheese at 36 cents a pound in any market in the world, and not even in Canada to the full quantity available. The production of cheese in Canada is just about equal to the consumption of cheese, and the best market for Canadian cheese is the market in Canada.

Mr. Charlton: Then why was there a surplus?

Mr. Howe: Because the price has been too high.