

Well, admit the farmer is nosing around after protection, but his protection will not help him. The Consumers' League says: Protection will not help the farmer. Then why should the Consumers' League worry about it? The danger is that it does help the farmer.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. BIRD: It is an old saying that he who postpones his laugh, laughs best, but this is the danger, the alluring feature about the matter: this is a commodity and practically the only staple commodity of which we have not enough by a long way for our domestic consumption. We are 25,000,000 pounds short. Put a tariff of three cents, ten cents or maybe more on butter and see what happens. Of course this will benefit the farmer. That is the danger. That is the danger my hon. friends ought to be apprehensive of in the face of the attack from my right, but they do not seem to be aware of it. They seem to be sitting over there in a fool's paradise. Here is a bait that really is a bait, that really is attractive.

Mr. YOUNG (Weyburn): We are not taking that bait.

Mr. BIRD: Of course my hon. friend's digestion is out of order. There is no bait that would appeal to him. As regards our consuming friends, I think the reason they call themselves consumers is that they consume precious opportunities without achieving very much. They say to us: What about your principles? I suppose by "principles" they mean the 1921 platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

Mr. DUNNING: Before my hon. friend leaves the question of butter, I wonder whether he would mind following that to its logical conclusion. He spoke of dangers. Just what is the danger in connection with placing a duty on butter? I know my hon. friend knows the danger.

Mr. BIRD: If my hon. friend will wait awhile, if I have time that is a point I am coming to in logical order. My hon. friends across the floor are so keen on logic that I must set an example of it in my speech, but I will come to that point. What about our principles? What about the platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture? Our friends from Alberta say they have receded from that platform. I am not sure whether I can go all the way with them or not, but our consumer's friends over here say they have receded from it too.

Mr. GEARY: The hon. member seems to be becoming more lonely all the time.

Mr. BIRD: I am not saying that I am standing on the platform; I may be receding somewhat too. I do not think it really lies in the mouth of either one party or the other to talk about standing true to principles. I do not think that is the point at all. The old Canadian Council of Agriculture platform had a very unfortunate career. Nine years ago it brought a large number of people to this house and achieved certain results, but at the expense of the group that was, to a large extent, instrumental in doing so. I do not think we need to weep over it, but the Canadian Council of Agriculture is a thing of the past. Our United Farmers of Alberta friends have gone from it on the command of their provincial organization, and our friends from Manitoba have gone from it in another direction.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): At whose command?

Mr. BIRD: As I said before, they have as much right to be where they are as I have to be where I am. It is not a matter of principle in that sense at all. The attitude I take is this: I stand where I did on the matter of free trade in food products, in all products, but I do not want to victimize myself by assenting to any one-sided arrangement as this treaty is. I am out for an all-round reduction in protection on all articles. While I know that one is easily imposed upon, there comes a point where the easiest of us will take a stand, even if it be at the expense of being insulted on account of one's principles. After all, principles sometimes have to be related to a momentary situation such as the one created by this treaty in which a one-sided arrangement was detrimental to the producer to the advantage of the manufacturer.

On the other hand, we have our friends to the right whispering in the other ear, making it difficult, almost intolerable for us, shattering our logic to a large extent. They say: Now is the chance of the farmer, now is the opportunity of the producer to get into the scramble. This is the door by which you can enter and share the spoils with the manufacturer. My answer to that is this: as long as I have been in the house I have never heard an hon. member of the opposition prove that we could protect the farmer in any effective way. The former leader of the opposition was a master dialectician; he often descanted upon this subject, but I call everybody present who was in parliament then to witness whether he at any time proved that you could protect