

Agricultural Products Act

a new assurance that almost all her surplus hog production will be reserved to meet new British contract requirements. The dominion has agreed to supply Britain in 1949 with 160 million pounds of bacon or approximately 71,000 long tons.

Doctor Summerskill spoke in a food debate in the House of Commons while Hon. J. G. Gardiner, Canadian Minister of Agriculture and his parliamentary secretary, Robert McCubbin, listened in the gallery. She said that Britain last January contracted with Canada for 100,000 tons of bacon but found that by December 31 it would be short-delivered by about 19,000 tons.

We understand that \$12 million of ECA funds to Britain were cancelled because our bacon contract fell short, and they would not transfer that amount to another contract. Does it not seem rather doubtful that Britain would refuse \$12 million in free aid from ECA just to make a contract with another nation, when she was so badly in need of food and dollars? As a matter of fact the truth will always out. We could not supply that bacon to Britain last fall; but the minister has twisted it around in this way. I quote from the *Toronto Globe and Mail* of January 6—

Mr. Grant: A good Tory paper.

Mr. Charlton: Yes, it is a good paper. The article is headed "Gardiner denies loss in British bacon deal," and goes on to say:

Canada did not lose out when the Economic Co-operation Administration cancelled a \$12 million authorization for Britain to buy Canadian bacon, Agriculture Minister James G. Gardiner said last night. He spoke to the Ontario Cheese Producers' Association at the Royal York hotel.

When the cancellation was announced Monday, an ECA official in Washington said he understood it was caused by Canada's failure to provide \$12 million worth of bacon intended to be delivered during the fourth quarter of 1948.

Then a little further on:

"It is suggested we lost \$12 million by cancellation of the bacon shipment," he said. Canada actually had made dollars through it, he claimed. With the pork products not wanted in Britain, they were used at home, enabling Canadian cattle to be sent to the United States. "If we ate more pork," he said, "we made dollars on the sale of beef."

Then a little further on:

There was only one product other than wheat that Britain wanted to buy in Canada this year, Mr. Gardiner said. That product was cheese. The contract for 1949 calls for 50 million pounds and, he said, he did not want "to read next year that we fell down." He would like to challenge the cheese producers to come back next year and say they had 75 million pounds to sell. If Canada could supply 100 million pounds yearly at a reasonable price, Britain would sign a contract for it, he said.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is pretty plain who is playing politics. Now the minister challenges the cheese producers to produce 75 million pounds, and at the same time he ties their hands behind their backs with this bill. What would the minister call a reasonable price? Obviously he thinks the present price is good,

[Mr. Charlton.]

or he should not have signed the contract. Also by inference he says to the cheese producers, "You produce 100 million pounds and I can get you less money for it". What kind of double talk is this? It sounds like a little more of the applause the minister was so full of when he came back from England and which he spread so freely in the house nearly a month ago, when he said in effect that many apple trees had been planted in England previous to the war, and practically all of them came into production in 1948.

Mr. Gardiner: Oh, no; they came into production in the middle of the war.

Mr. Charlton: Well, you intimated that they had come into production around that time, and that was why Britain did not want any of our apples in 1948. That was the minister's statement.

Mr. Gardiner: Not quite that.

Mr. Charlton: Well, if the minister does not believe me let him look at page 780 of *Hansard* and see for himself. I wonder if he actually thinks the fruit growers of this country will believe that sort of trash.

Mr. Gardiner: They all know it.

Mr. Ferguson: We have told them the truth.

Mr. Charlton: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, in 1948 the United Kingdom bought 466,179 hundredweight more fresh apples than they bought in 1947, and incidentally paid more for them than they paid Canada in 1947. The table appears at page 1068 of *Hansard* so anyone who wishes may check it. I need not read it again; it is there for anyone to see. As a matter of fact there is only one product out of a list of ten which Britain is buying in other countries for less than Canada is charging. I refer to the official publication of the Department of Trade and Commerce, *Foreign Trade* for February 26, 1949, in which the pound has been figured out at the official rate of \$4.03. These are comparative prices of United Kingdom imports of foodstuffs from Canada and from all other countries, per hundredweight. I do not want to read the whole table, but I would like permission to place it on *Hansard*.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Golding): Has the hon. member permission to place the table on *Hansard*?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Gardiner: I should like some idea of what it is.

Mr. Charlton: I just said it was a table from the official publication of the Department of Trade and Commerce, called *Foreign Trade*.