

amount." We went on discussing the matter and finally agreed that there is a great deal of vegetable oils consumed all across the south country, consumed on vegetables instead of securing fats from animal production, but having the same results. After we counted all the figures we found that the individual on the other side of the line is eating about the same amount of butter plus oils as the individual in Canada eats of butter plus oils. So that when we talk about dealing with our people on this side of the line in the same way that they are dealing with their people on the other side of the line, we must take all the facts into consideration. It is not sufficient to say that in the United States they are rationing a product down to a certain level, and that therefore it must be rationed down to the same level in this country. We must take all the substitutes into consideration, and having done so, I believe every hon. member will agree that since we are in this war together we cannot build up on this side of the line a condition in relation to the feeding of our people which differs from the condition on the other side of the line, without creating a wrong impression. There may be a necessity for rationing to make greater supplies available to our allies even if there is no shortage of food products.

Or go, as I did a few months ago, to Britain. The British said to us: We want so much of a certain product if you can give it to us; and ever since the beginning of the war this government has taken the position that if it is at all possible to give Britain or any other of our allies the food supplies necessary to the winning of the war, even if it means a regulation of the supplies to our own people, we prefer to give those supplies to the men and women who are in the front line of battle and fighting or suffering attack from day to day.

Again, Mr. Speaker, if it were not for rumours, if it were not for the publicity given to what are sometimes facts, we might not need to ration in this country. When a housewife goes to the butcher shop in war time and finds that she cannot get the cut which she desires from beef, or probably any beef at all, and the butcher says, "You might take lamb, or chicken, or turkey," somebody learns of that and writes it up as a story—usually not the housewife; usually someone else. In peace time what did we do under similar circumstances? We walked down the street a half-mile to another store and usually were able to find, if not exactly what we wanted, a reasonable substitute therefor. If we were doing that to-day in respect of food products we would not have as much agitation

for rationing as we have. But even if we do the very best we can, even if we kill every rumour at its inception, when it is decided to cut down the supplies to the civilian population to absolute necessities there must be some kind of regulation of distribution, otherwise some will be left with nothing and others will have too much. So that it is not necessarily shortage in production which brings about rationing; it may be a shortage occasioned by the methods or incidence of distribution. We have had rationing of tea, of sugar and of coffee. All these are products which are produced in large volume outside this country and shipped in, and we have rationing because of an interference with shipping between those countries and Canada brought about by the war. Exactly the same reason brought about rationing at the beginning of the war in Britain, and in the end will bring rationing of some products in most countries.

Someone else says that labour has been a limiting factor in the production of our farms. I have been reviewing the speeches of hon. members opposite in other sessions, and I find that in every session since the war started there have been men on the other side of the house who have said that because of a labour shortage on farms it will be impossible to reach the objectives set by the department. One of those hon. gentlemen has already spoken in this debate and has made the same statement. He made it in 1941 and 1942; he has now made it in 1943. On each of the other occasions, in spite of any shortages of labour there may have been, we did reach those objectives. When anyone asks me whether labour is a limiting factor in production on farms, I say: it has been a limiting factor on a certain type of farm ever since the war began. And what type of farm is that? It is the type of farm from which every last son joined the army or the air force or the navy in the first weeks of the war. Why did they do it? They did it because they thought it was the most necessary thing to do at that time in order to bring this war to a successful conclusion as soon as possible. I am sure that we will all agree that while they may have left difficulties upon the farm, they are entitled to the thanks of this house, of the Dominion of Canada, and of the allied nations generally for the attitude they took. There is still a labour shortage on many of those farms.

There is another type of farm on which there has been a labour shortage ever since the war started. That labour shortage did not begin with this war; it started on exactly the same kind of farm as that from which all of the sons who were engaged in agriculture enlisted in the last war. At that time their