

Position of Agricultural Industry

given of the quota system in the United States under the 1934, 1937, and 1948 acts that the quota system has not been restrictive to trade in that nation in relation to sugar.

One can obtain an illustration from the green and red lights on the street. When you come to a red light it means stop—and it does mean stop. That, however, does not restrict traffic. That actually makes it possible for traffic to be more free and more rapid than it could possibly be without red lights. I suggest that a quota system, which might look like an absolute prevention or an absolute measure forbidding trade, actually, under the circumstances which have obtained in the United States, has been a measure making for freer trade.

We might also talk about lower tariffs. We have a number of men in our government offices who have a sort of craze over trade and low tariffs. They will be greatly comforted to discover that, under the quota system and these three acts in the United States, they have lowered the tariffs in a way that might have been impossible if it had not been for the quota system.

There are a great many people who talk about non-discrimination in trade. Some statements have been made by certain members in this house to the effect that they want trade to be just as free as the wind. They did not use just those words, but if there were other words to describe anything freer to express the thought they would have been using those other words.

I ask hon. members how long trade in respect of sugar in Canada will be free if we have Cuban sugar entering unrestricted into our market. I have already referred to that in my speech.

If we let Cuban sugar come in here, refined sugar, there will not be another nation on the face of the earth which will send one pound of sugar into Canada. Anyone who sees non-discrimination in trade in that prospect must have coloured glasses of a kind that I have not yet seen.

I do not hesitate to recommend to those who have authority in respect of sugar in Canada that they should give most careful thought to this matter of the quota system as it has been used and applied in the United States sugar acts of 1934, 1937 and 1948.

Mr. J. A. Charlton (Brant-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I am speaking in support of the amendment which was moved by my hon. colleague, the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) on March 23, and I think it would be well if the amendment were read

to the house now, because it was moved over two weeks ago. The amendment reads:

That all the words after "that" to the end of the question be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"in the opinion of this house consideration should be given by the government to the advisability of introducing during the present session legislation to provide floor prices for agricultural products at such levels as to ensure producers a fair price-cost relationship."

Now, to use an oft-quoted, slang term, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) has been viewing the whole situation from a little pink cloud through rose-coloured glasses. I realize, however, that there is probably a good reason for this ultraoptimism and arrogant attitude. We are told that there is going to be an election before the snow flies; and probably the minister is just getting wound up for the campaign. At page 3225 of *Hansard* for March 23 the minister, in referring to farm prices, had this to say:

I am not going to try to guess what they will be ten years from now, but I am going to make the statement that so long as this government is in power, and so long as the policy we have been following throughout the last ten years is continued, prices will go down less than they would under any other kind of policy that could be established in this country by any other government.

I have always been taught that no one is so good that he can never be replaced. History is very interesting but it is only interesting when told truthfully and when facts are stated. It is rather tiresome for those of us on this side of the house to hear members from the government side keep repeating and repeating what happened in the 1930's and how this government has improved the situation since that time. I want to remind members on the government side of the house that the depression or crash, as they called it, occurred in 1929 and the election at which the Liberal government was defeated did not take place until July 1930. Anyone who suspects that the Conservative government in power between 1930 and 1935 was the cause of the depression is certainly not conversant with the facts.

On page 3218 the Minister of Agriculture in referring to parity and I will quote his words:

The only objection I have to the word "parity" is that I seldom know what people mean when they use it.

There is an interjection:

An hon. Member: They don't, either.

And then:

Mr. Gardiner: I do not understand what they are really talking about when they use the word.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is rather odd to find that the minister himself, when speaking to