

*Agricultural Prices Support Act*

questions on the loss of the preference and asking why our delegation gave up the preference. The tenor of your answer was that it was felt the British preference on apples was not of very substantial value and you said the British apple market was losing its attraction. I would like to read the words you yourself used when questioned as to the British apple production and you said:

At this point, the hon. member for Kamloops quoted Mr. MacKinnon.

I believe that they could produce this year all their requirements; they would not need to import a single apple. Apart altogether from considerations of exchange and trade agreements, they would not need to import an apple for their own use this year. The extent to which the orchards in Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Norfolk have been developed is simply amazing. We had to keep in mind the consideration that we were dealing, as Mr. Deutsch intimated yesterday, with the livelihood of our people. The fact was that the United Kingdom market was becoming not only less attractive in that sense, but probably less real as regards the benefit of the preference; that is, in view particularly of the fact, in the short term, that she had no money with which to buy apples; and, in the long term, that it seems to be her policy to become self-sufficient in apples.

Then the member for Kamloops continued:

Now I hesitate to disagree with you, Mr. MacKinnon, naturally, but I should say this. I questioned the British food commission in Canada on those statements and I have a number of figures here which they gave me as to their own apple production, and I can find nothing in what they told me to substantiate your statement that the United Kingdom is seeking to become self-sufficient in apples.

Then later on, Mr. MacKinnon says:

However, it apparently is the fact that, from now on, barring the unforeseen catastrophe in the form of blights or bad weather, Britain will be self-sufficient as regards fresh apples.

There was further questioning of Mr. MacKinnon with respect to the question of the loss of British preference for apples, and at page 238 of the committee report he was asked the following question:

Just on that point, Mr. MacKinnon, was there any pressure by the United States or any other nation as to the elimination of this particular preference?

Mr. MacKinnon: No more pressure than was brought to bear by the United States in respect to many preferences.

Now that was the point, Mr. Speaker. At the time we were discussing this question in 1948, the two points I made were, first, that I was quite certain there were future possibilities for the sale of Canadian apples in the British market; and second, that pressure had been brought by the United States upon our delegation to relinquish these preferences, although at the same time they were trying to tell us that there was nothing worth-while being relinquished. I think any sensible person would realize that no competent United States businessman uses his pressure for the removal of a preference unless it means some advantage to him.

I think that the government made a big mistake in overlooking the future possibilities for the sale of Canadian apples in the British market. British Columbia must find a market for between two and a half million and three million boxes a year, in the export market, if the producer is going to experience any sense of stability. What are the facts? In 1948 our officials said this market had disappeared, that it had no future. The facts are these. Approximately within the last thirty days the Australians made a deal with Great Britain to supply three and a half million boxes of apples. At the present time the shops in England are full of United States apples. Large importations are coming from Italy; hundreds of thousands of pounds of apples, not boxes, are going to Great Britain. Going to Britain are also apples from Belgium and the Netherlands. The demand is there in Great Britain for Canadian apples. The correspondence I receive from relatives and friends in England indicates that they miss Canadian apples in the British market. Our government has relinquished these preferences, has done nothing, and these countries are taking advantage of the situation.

I have here a quotation I wish to give. It is from *Country Life*, the August 1949 issue. *Country Life* is an agricultural paper published in British Columbia. The article is headed: "British Lament Miserable Quality of Import Apples: Italian Disgrace Cull Pile", and reads in part as follows:

"Everyone in (Great Britain) was lamenting the miserable quality of apples—not only domestic, but imported supplies. The greatest criticism was directed at Italian imports which were said to have arrived in shocking condition and were a disgrace to a cull pile."

These are sentences taken from the introductory paragraph of a report, prepared by Fred A. Motz, agricultural economist, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, following an examination of fruit marketing conditions in the United Kingdom, as part of the "study of foreign market outlets and competition with United States fruits, conducted under the provisions of the U.S. research and marketing act."

From my knowledge of what the situation is in Great Britain at the present time and from what I read in articles such as this, of the actions of the United States government, I think they are, shall I say, much keener than our government has been in finding markets for these commodities. I think there is no question about it, Mr. Speaker, that we made a big mistake in giving up the British preference, and when we took for granted what we were told, namely, that there was no future for Canadian apples in the British market.

I ask our government to give further consideration to the matter. I realize the sterling difficulties but I think these can be overcome if \$4 million or \$5 million of the \$400