

*Canada-United Kingdom Trade Agreement*

Why cannot the government do something for the Canadian consumer, who is crying for relief, and who wants galvanized sheets? Why cannot they do something? That is what I want to know. We did it in connection with Indian corn; why can we not do it for black sheets? There is only one house in Canada producing them, and that house is sold out and will not quote prices for future delivery. That plant is working to capacity, and yet here is a person crying for galvanized sheets; people are crying for them. They are very much in demand in western Canada, as every hon. member from that part of the country must know. Hardware firms which usually supply them are driven to the position of either importing galvanized sheets from the United States and paying a high duty, thereby putting out of employment employees in Canadian galvanizing plants, or doing without them. The hon. member for Davenport referred to a plant at Sarnia, but I shall not make special reference to it at the moment.

Aside from all that, why cannot the government ask the British government, in view of the fact that Great Britain is unable to supply us with what we require, to let us take down the tariff barrier for three months, in order that the supply may be made available for the Canadian galvanizer with his pots at Sarnia, or elsewhere as the case may be? South Africa at once acceded to such a request when we asked them about corn.

Mr. DUNNING: They took a little time.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes—until they found out they were going to have no crop. As soon as they saw there was a crop failure they realized that Canadians had to have corn and they said, "As the corn cannot come from us, and you want to let it in, go ahead and do it"—and we did it.

Here is the steel situation. Iron sheets are required for galvanizing. We cannot buy them in Canada; we cannot buy them from Great Britain, but we can buy them from the United States. But if we have to pay 20 per cent duty on them, together with a three per cent excise tax, the price of raw material will be so high that the galvanizer in Canada cannot possibly supply the market. That is the position. Why can we not do something to help out?

I suggest to the minister that the British government be asked to permit us for three months to import raw material from other countries. Someone will say, "You cannot get raw material from the United States." You can, because I know of a manufacturer who has quotations on it, and can obtain delivery in three weeks. I do not know

[Mr. Bennett.]

whether that supply will last long, but I do say that here is a situation created by world conditions, and that under that situation Canadians cannot get their supply. I should have said earlier in my remarks that some have a supply, or a partial supply, and can galvanize. Others cannot, however, because they have not the raw material. The answer of some people is, "If their credit was good enough they would have bought a supply and put it away in warehouses in England. Had they done that, they would have it now." We cannot ruin our business by showing favouritism of that kind, where business would depend on whether a man had a million dollars in the bank at a particular time. True, some of them were able to make purchases and to store those purchases in anticipation of a situation under which, if pressed, they could draw from their stores. But that is not this case. This is a condition exactly similar to that which obtained in connection with the corn situation in South Africa and the Argentine. I believe England is not unfair; at least I never found them so in the four and a half years we had dealings with them in connection with the trade agreement. They were always reasonable with respect to any request made. If we asked them for a period of two or three months, or as the minister may determine, to place black sheets on the free list, I have every reason to believe our request would be favourably considered—unless they have changed their general policy in dealing with matters of this kind.

Mr. DUNNING: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry that I replied to the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. MacNicol) in connection with the item at present before the committee. I was not dealing with the matter to which the leader of the opposition is referring. It was my expectation that I would have to make detailed reference to that item when we reached it in the schedule, at a point about ten items beyond the one now before the committee. Perhaps it would facilitate the work of the committee if we were to pass along, and deal with the matter in proper order.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Davenport dealt with it, and that is the reason I did so.

Mr. DUNNING: I did not understand the hon. member for Davenport to be referring to black sheets.

Mr. BENNETT: He was talking about sheets for galvanizing.

Item agreed to.