

Agricultural Products Act

houses, and so forth. As I say, the prosperity of the cities, and the employment of workers therein, depend upon successful marketing. In my particular city there are a number of plants to which that is vital.

We have been told at various stages of this debate that the outlook for foreign trade is none too bright. Perhaps the minister can put me right as to the figures; he usually puts us right when we on this side of the house go wrong. According to my calculations, European sales of Canadian goods are off in 1948 over 1947 by approximately \$175 million. If it were not for United States dollars which are paid to us for our products that we ship to Great Britain and to Europe, the situation would be even worse. Secondly, if it were not for the Canadian loan, which I understand has been unfrozen at the rate of \$10 million a month, we would have a major slump right now, and would be unable to sell our agricultural products at all. As the United States becomes able through surpluses to supply goods which she is now paying us to supply, our exports under ERP will be blocked, and the United States will become, not the country which pays the bills, but rather our rival in the markets of Europe in the sale of agricultural products. We have already the example of flax, which has been declared surplus. The United States will not supply the funds to pay us for that commodity.

I was pleased the other day to hear the minister speak very cordially of the British, and those men with whom he had to negotiate as to our farm products. I rather discredited the press reports when I saw some months ago that the minister was apparently rather annoyed at Great Britain, and with some of the negotiators. I noticed that other members of the house must have had the same idea, because the member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) said at an earlier stage of the debate that he thought the minister had put up the best fight that anyone could with the British authorities. Those are the words of the member for New Westminster. I think that the phraseology was somewhat unfortunate, in that it reminded me of certain blasting into the British markets that was supposed to have been done rather unsuccessfully some years ago. I noticed in that same speech that the hon. member for New Westminster was concerned about Great Britain supplying certain materials to countries behind the iron curtain. I wonder if the hon. member still believes that the profit motive implies either ethics or patriotism. It was not only eggs that British Columbia sent to Japan by the shipload not very many years ago.

I do not think we can blame our European customers too much. Is it reasonable for us

to expect that the British will continue to buy four times as much from us as we buy from them? They just have not the dollars. Can we expect them to spend dollars on anything that, under those circumstances and considering the state of exchange, they can grow for themselves? They only have the dollars supplied through ERP, the Canadian loan, and those which they earn themselves through their foreign trade. They are setting out to supply their own needs, and I do not think that the producers of this country realize to what extent they are doing so. They have plans in that regard. I have here a pamphlet which shows what one part of the British isles is doing. The British have a four-year plan. I should like to read in part from the Ulster Commentary as follows:

The British four-year plan has a special importance for Ulster farmers because the expansion in the output of British agriculture plays a vital part in the plan. It is proposed to raise output above the highest point reached in the war years. The allocation of the increased output between different parts of the United Kingdom has already been worked out.

The article then proceeds to quote the Ulster minister of agriculture as follows:

In Ulster we are asked to build up production so that in a few years there will be the following increases in our agricultural output compared with 1946-47.

Then he proceeds to quote progressively increasing figures, 8,000 tons more beef, 36,000 tons more pork, 35 million dozen more eggs, and so on. Then he goes on to say:

Today we are more than ever dependent on America as the principal source of imported food. But to buy food and feeding stuffs in America requires dollars, and it is there that our problem lies. That is why it is necessary for the Ulster farmers to produce more milk, eggs, meat and bacon, and also to grow on their own farms a great part of the food required by their livestock and poultry.

If Great Britain has plans like that, and if she carries them out successfully—and from my observations over the last three or four years I have no doubt that she will be successful—then I think that the Minister of Agriculture and the farmers of Canada should not be thinking of the past but should ask themselves the question, what of the future?

Basically this matter of trade with Great Britain means that we must be prepared to accept more of her goods. I am not sure that the government is taking all the steps necessary to ensure the import of such goods. Have we, for example, revised our tariff regulations to facilitate such imports, imports which would in turn pay for our agricultural exports? I suggest that is one method which might be explored. Some minister is going to tell me that the British cannot supply sufficient goods, and that their prices are too high. I am well aware that the British