

Interim Supply

academic question in many instances; that the potato growers of the maritime provinces were in some doubts and disagreements as to what ought to be done with respect to tariffs at that time and whether or not we could negotiate a new tariff except on favourable terms. I do want to point out just precisely what has been said in the final words of my hon. friend, that times have changed in Canada, that the markets are different, and that when that change came about was the first time there was an opinion in favour of the action we have taken just recently. Indeed, I could point out inconsistencies in things that were said by my hon. friends opposite up to as late as last week about potato marketing.

But the plain fact of the matter is that a large portion of the potato industry in the maritime provinces until recently thought that the agreement under which we had been acting was more advantageous than any other agreement which might be made, and the change has come about, as I said, in the past two or three years by the realization that the Canadian market was more valuable to Canadian potato producers than was the United States market. When that time came about, and when the Canadian horticultural council for the first time had practically unanimously an opinion about this, this government took action under the general agreement on tariffs and trade and brought about the change at the earliest possible moment.

My hon. friend makes reference to turkeys. I presume he took some part in the debate the other evening. I am sorry I was not in the house when he spoke but he knows perfectly well that the producers of turkeys in this country a year ago last fall asked this government if we would negotiate a change in tariff with the United States so that there would be the same tariff on turkeys entering Canada as on those entering the United States and that is the only request this government has received from the turkey industry unless there has been one in recent days that I have not seen. We did that and brought it out in the budget last year and my hon. friends up to this moment do not seem to realize that although I have drawn it to their attention.

One other thing about which there may be some doubt is this. I have never understood the argument that the farmers of this country are somehow being deprived of their markets abroad by the actions of this government. I would not want to say that it would not be desirable to have markets abroad because indeed it would. Everyone knows full well that the more goods you sell the

more money you make. But every time I have gone to a farm meeting and every time this question has arisen I have asked the farmers for an explanation as to what they would like done; for example, with respect to butter.

I said the other night at a farm meeting, "Well now, butter is selling in London, England at 30 cents a pound; is that market one that you want?" And the answer was, "No, we want the Canadian market at 58 cents a pound".

So far as beef, hogs and the like are concerned when I interrupted my hon. friend a moment ago it was to say that the reason we were not selling these abroad was for the same reason, that the prices obtained in Canada by the Canadian farmer were higher than they were abroad. I have listened attentively to every speech my hon. friend has made—

An hon. Member: You had better.

Mr. Harris:—and not once has he followed through with the only possible argument he could make and be consistent and that is that this government or the taxpayer of Canada rather ought nevertheless to find out of the agricultural industry in Canada butter, shall we say, and sell it abroad at a subsidized price such as 30 cents. Yet, my hon. friend was the first to rise on his feet and raise some kind of question when we shipped butter abroad and sold it at 40 cents when it was in its third year of storage. If my hon. friend seriously insists that for some reason he cannot explain to us it is desirable that we should retain these markets the only possible way we can do it is for the Canadian taxpayer to say to the Canadian farmer, "Will you produce more than you are now producing? The government will take it from you and ship it abroad and subsidize you to the point where you can enter that market at the going price;" and this will be a publicly announced policy of the Conservative party; and up to the present time I have not heard them recommend that although some of my hon. friends in the C.C.F. have said it with respect to wheat at least but I don't think they have done it with respect to butter.

When I go to farm meetings and this question comes up and when I ask my farm friends, "Do you want to enter that market on those terms?" I find that the farming people of Canada say, "No, we do not. We like the Canadian market and we prefer the policy of your government to any policy we have heard advanced by the Tory party so far in our lifetime."