

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): Promises of the abolition of seasonal tariffs were made in this house and throughout the country. Promises were made of the abolition of the dumping duties and the fixed valuations. Read the Prime Minister's speech at Woodstock. If hon. members of the government have a mandate to negotiate a reciprocal trade agreement with the United States that does not give reciprocal advantages to Canada, then I submit they have an equal mandate to abolish the dumping duties, the seasonal tariffs and the fixed valuations. That was part of their preelection pledges.

An hon. MEMBER: Do you want that done?

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): I certainly do not. I am only pointing out that it might be considered as one of the first recantations of the government. That argument certainly was used on every platform in Ontario. I have received letters from vegetable growers in my district who are growing asparagus and other vegetables. Eight or ten thousand acres of marsh land have been reclaimed at very great expense and they are wondering what the government is going to do. These men want to know what the government's policy will be in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is out of order. He must confine his remarks to the item before the committee, that dealing with asparagus.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): Surely asparagus is either a fruit or a vegetable.

Mr. DUNNING: I am not sure which it is.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): The minister says he is not sure which it is, and I am not surprised at his saying that.

Mr. DUNNING: Are you sure yourself?

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): I think I know as much about it as the minister.

Mr. DUNNING: Which is it?

Mr. STIRLING: A vegetable.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): The government is maintaining the principles which it condemned so vigorously before the elections. If this is being done for the protection of the fruit and vegetable growers, I commend the government.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine his remarks to asparagus.

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): The minister has told us already that these fixed valuations will apply to vegetables such as asparagus.

Mr. DUNNING: Is it a vegetable?

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): Certainly it is.

Mr. DUNNING: Is it?

Mr. BENNETT: It is so classified.

Mr. DUNNING: Are you sure?

Mr. ROWE (Dufferin): The fruit and vegetable growers in the district to which I have referred are having their livelihood threatened, so much so that they are considering whether it is worth while to sow a crop this year. If we are to be assured that the government is going to do the opposite to what it said it would do before the elections, then the fruit and vegetable growers can have some assurance.

Mr. DUNNING: If my hon. friend wants an assurance that the government will do the opposite to what it professed it would do, I can tell him that he will get no such assurance. Section 43 was placed upon the statute books by a great Liberal Minister of Finance, the Right Hon. W. S. Fielding. The attitude of the Liberal party with respect to natural products is as it has been always. We recognize the special circumstances and difficulties which surround the production of these commodities. We recognize the need of special machinery which may not be required in the production of other commodities. The machinery is there and the government intends to use it for the purposes for which it was placed on the statute book.

Mr. SPENCE: Now you are committed to something.

Mr. DUNNING: That provides an excellent illustration of the impossibility of giving positive assurances with respect to this from year to year, and my hon. friend from Parkdale tells me he does not know at what date action should be taken.

Mr. SPENCE: I was not asking for the date.

Mr. DUNNING: I think he said also that he was the only expert in the house.

Mr. SPENCE: I did not intend to say that.

Mr. DUNNING: My hon. friend takes it in good part. I acknowledge at once he has special and peculiar knowledge with respect to this matter, and his statement was helpful in that it indicates the very difficulties which do surround the administration of section 43 with respect to natural products. I can assure him, and I am sure the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Ilsley) can also assure him of the best and closest attention of the government to the matter as time progresses.