

*Australian Treaty—Mr. Millar*

I say frankly that I do not want to see trade negotiations entirely eliminated between Canada and Australia. I believe that there is much to be gained by a treaty, and I take it for granted that if the government abrogated this treaty they would negotiate another one that would not be based on the present discriminations. That is what I have in mind in supporting the amendment, that the present treaty will be supplanted by a better one.

Mr. JOHN MILLAR (Qu'Appelle): We have heard at considerable length during this debate as to what the various dairymen's associations think about this matter, but we have not heard enough about what the dairymen themselves, those actually engaged in the business, think about it. I wish to place on Hansard the statement of a prominent dairyman of Saskatchewan, but before doing so I would refer to a report of the dairymen's association of Manitoba, held in the city of Winnipeg on the 6th of February last. Mr. P. E. Reid, dairy commissioner of Saskatchewan, delivered an address before the association, and from a Winnipeg Free Press correspondent's report, I quote:

Saskatchewan, last year produced an exportable surplus of dairy products, i.e., exported outside of the province; that it was useless to expect the farmer to milk cows if he could make more and easier money in any other branch of farming.

The same correspondent states that in the addresses delivered by Doctor Marker, of Alberta, and Mr. Gibson, of Manitoba, there was no reference to the Australian treaty one way or the other. That is rather significant. This correspondent says that they stressed the necessity of quality and quantity production, and by inference one could assume that they were not worrying about markets, and profitable markets, if we improved our quality and increased our production. The correspondent goes on to say:

These convention resolutions do not mean so much as some people would imagine.

I also wish to quote part of a letter written by Mr. Henry Thompson, a prominent dairy farmer of Fairlight, Saskatchewan, for twenty-two years, and a member of the dairymen's association. He says:

I am very much of the opinion that if this protection was restored it would not benefit the producers one iota. Our biggest difficulty right along, as I find it, is that manufacturers are taking too much of the cream off the bowls right along, particularly here in Saskatchewan. They have played the same game for two or three years, to my knowledge. At the conventions they have worked a scheme to have a similar resolution put over each time.

[Mr. Campbell.]

In another part of his letter he says:

Concerning the joint dairy association, held in the Saskatchewan hotel, Regina, two years ago, for about six weeks or so previous to this convention the price paid for this grade was 45 cents per pound f.o.b. Regina, but the price was dropped 3 cents to the producers, and in conversation with a prominent creamery manager of one of the city creameries, he stated to me a short while after, that there was no local cause to warrant that drop in price, as really their supply for that grade of cream was not equal to demand, and they personally could have advanced the price to 50 cents and give the producers the benefit, without hurting themselves in the least, and that they were able to pay over 10 per cent dividend that same year.

In describing the manner in which these dairy conventions are manipulated, Mr. Thompson says:

When we greenhorns have sat and listened for some considerable time to these wonderful orations, and in rather an abrupt and blunt manner suggest that we do not accept these framed resolutions, as they have thus been prepared and cooked for us, it appears a bit funny, but the chairman begins to fidget and looks at his watch and reminds us there are other speakers yet to come, and, "I am afraid we will have to curtail this discussion. I am awfully sorry."

That is the way a prominent dairyman of Saskatchewan looks upon those resolutions on this question of protection on butter; stereotyped resolutions "prepared and cooked" for them.

I would refer to the reference made by the member for North Vancouver (Mr. McRae) to the attitude taken towards the Australian treaty by a prominent manufacturer. He said the manufacturers were behind the demand of the dairymen's association. I am not surprised at that in the least. The question in my mind is this: Which way did he reason; did he reason that in a short time the price of butter in Canada—provided the duty were increased to four cents a pound, thus bringing about increased production and reduced consumption—would be brought down to an export basis all the year round, and his workers would get cheaper butter than at present? Was that part of his reasoning? I think perhaps it was. Another reason probably is this, that by supporting the dairymen's association the manufacturers were allying themselves with those who are supposed to be representing the farmers, and they were gaining strength and support for their own efforts in getting protection for the manufacturing industry.

I listened with considerable interest to the addresses, particularly those from hon. members immediately across the floor. I found that in many respects their reasoning was sound but their conclusions were faulty. Take for instance the reasoning of the member for Red