

namely, that the lumbermen in the milling industry are able to get more across the line. I believe the minister should answer this question: Why does the government allow that situation to exist? Are they more interested in securing United States dollars than in securing Canadian homes? If so, let the minister answer what the government is prepared to do about that situation. The people of Canada do not know these facts; they are not everyday facts that are publicized. I think that answer is due to the people of Canada. I have listened to the debate to-night. Much of it I have not been able to hear; much of it I have not been able to understand, because I wondered whether members were talking in the English language or in the language of some far-off, distant realm. To-day we have not said very much about this.

We know the minister did well throughout the war years. He has had a responsible position and he has developed into a sort of tough guy. As I say, I have listened to the debate in this committee. This house is the house of free speech, but I can assure hon. members they are not going to change the minister's mind one bit. He is going on in just the same old way, doing just what he wants to do. Will the minister tell us why this situation with respect to the export of lumber exists and what the government is prepared to do to remedy it so that Canadians can get more lumber? If in the statement that the minister has placed on *Hansard* he says there is no shortage of lumber, then I shall tell him that there is something faulty in the distribution of it, because in many smaller places of this country one cannot buy any lumber; it is not there. Therefore he had better answer either the one question or the other.

Mr. HOWE: Perhaps I should have read the statement. The statement shows that during the past twelve months 4,800,000,000 feet of lumber came on the Canadian market. Of that about forty-two per cent has been exported. The reason for the export is this: We have maintained the level of export that we had pre-war; that is, in board feet. We have not increased it. We are exporting to the United States the same amount that we exported in 1938 and 1939. We are exporting the same amount to the United Kingdom as we did pre-war. We are exporting about the same amount to Australia and New Zealand that we did pre-war, but our total cut has increased by one billion feet and that one billion feet is going into the Canadian market. The reason we have been able to maintain fairly well our price level in timber is that

[Mr. Hansell.]

the percentage of export, which has been allowed, which, remember, is only the pre-war level, is at a much higher rate, particularly the exports to the United States. By averaging out the domestic sales and domestic price with the export sales and export prices the lumber dealer is getting a fair return for his labour.

My hon. friend suggested that we cut off the exports to the United States. Let me remind him that if we took that step the United States could take similar action with coal, cotton, sugar, gasoline and other commodities of that kind. Across the boundary we have maintained the pre-war position. We are getting about the same amount of coal, perhaps more, than we got pre-war. We are getting our share of gasoline, and in times of great need you do not just say to your neighbour: "I am sorry; we cannot deal with you; we need the lumber ourselves; when we have a surplus we will let you know," because that works two ways, and it would be very unfortunate for Canada if anything of that kind developed.

If my hon. friend will read the statement I have just placed on *Hansard* it will clear up a good many misconceptions about the lumber situation in Canada and the relation of exports to domestic use. The main trouble about lumber is the matter of distribution. Before the war we were accustomed to going to lumber yards which carried large stocks and coming back with just what we needed. We cannot do that to-day; the lumber is going directly into consumption, which is the proper channel when we are working on rock bottom. It would be unfortunate if any part of the country had large stocks of lumber. I believe the statement I put on *Hansard* will clear up the situation.

Mr. BRACKEN: The remarks made by the minister in the last minute or two justify me in saying only a brief word. When I rose a few moments ago, it was only to ask him to do what he has just now done, namely to state, for the information of the committee, the position with respect to the supply of lumber; what it is; where it goes; what is the percentage of exports, and how the domestic share is distributed at home. Now, since we are assured by the hon. member for Macleod, who has been in this house for some ten years, that the minister is a tough guy, and that there is no chance of our changing his mind on anything, I suggest that we pass the item.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): With all due respect, I wish to take issue with the statement of the minister, to this effect, that none of