

paid to prices. Quebec having been left out, the prices for maritimes potatoes were pegged on the Montreal and Toronto markets at such a figure as to make it almost impossible for New Brunswick and other parts of the maritime provinces to compete. The Quebec potato growers could enter the Montreal markets without grading; they could sell to commission merchants and deliver their potatoes when and how they pleased, while the potatoes entering this market from the maritimes were governed by certain regulations which almost shut them out of that market. The potato producers of Ontario were in a different position, because they had to sell, produce or transfer their potatoes to markets under certain regulations; but the price of maritime potatoes was pegged at sixty-five cents per bag on the track at Toronto, not including freight or feeds, as against forty-five cents per bag for Ontario potatoes. A comparison of these prices will show why the potato producers of the maritime provinces have felt aggrieved. It is no wonder that in April they started an agitation to have the pegging of prices discontinued. The board, when these complaints were laid before them, reduced the price. I believe they reduced it from 60 to 50 cents a bag on the rail at Toronto, and later on it was reduced from 50 to 47½, if I am not mistaken. That reduction at that date, according to our potato growers, came too late for them to take any advantage of the situation, and finally, I am informed, the pegging system was done away with altogether and—if I am misinformed in that respect I wish to be corrected by the minister—after a certain date, towards the end of April and even at this date, the price of potatoes is no longer pegged and the maritime potato growers are allowed to sell their potatoes as best they can. I maintain that the pegging of prices spelled ruin to our potato growers in New Brunswick, and I am not surprised that after an experience of a couple of months of this new system of marketing their product they do not feel as friendly towards the co-operative scheme of marketing as they did in the past. I regret that the occasion has arisen which has brought about dissatisfaction among our potato growers in New Brunswick. I should like to have seen the cooperative system work successfully, but when the bill was before the house I protested that "co-operative system" as defined therein would not operate satisfactorily. I especially referred on that occasion to its application to the fisheries of the maritimes, at the same time including farm products, and I regret very much that the failure of the system, from the

month of February last up to the present time, has given a black eye to the principle even of voluntary cooperative work among the farmers of New Brunswick.

I do not wish to take up too much time, but there are certain further points which I wish to place before the minister in case another attempt is made to work out this system in a better way. I had already complained to the minister before the Easter recess. I had laid before him certain information that had been given to me and upon which I felt I could rely in connection with the operation of this marketing board. The minister undertook to look into the matter and let me have whatever information he could gather. I wish to thank him. He has given me that information, but still it does not meet the conditions as I see them and as others see them in the province from which I come. I have already referred to the condition that existed in the province of Quebec when they refused to come into the scheme, a practice which was detrimental to the pegging of prices so far as New Brunswick potatoes on the Montreal market were concerned. I understand that Quebec was later to come into the scheme, and the information that appeared in the press was that it did so some time about the middle of April. I do not know whether they are still in it or whether it has been completely abandoned so far as the eastern potato marketing board is concerned.

Let me point out to the minister in connection with the pegging of prices of maritime potatoes on the tracks at Toronto, that when I stated that the price was sixty cents my information was gleaned from a statement published by the gentleman who represents New Brunswick on the marketing board. It was published over his own signature in the New Brunswick papers early in February. As a matter of fact it was sixty-five cents for a ninety-pound bag, while Ontario potatoes were pegged at twenty cents a bag lower. But my information was that there was no pegged price for Ontario potatoes delivered by the grower to the Ontario dealer by motor truck. And here again arose a discrepancy. By this system of transportation he could even sell at a figure below the price on rail. Now this is claimed to exist or to have existed. I am not in a position to state that this is accurate. I should like the minister to enlighten me so as to dispel any misunderstanding that may exist in New Brunswick on that point. I wish to be fair in the matter. I am speaking only on behalf of those who have approached