

*Farm Prices*

I ask, for information only, why it is stated that the board shall be "a body corporate and politic." What is the reason for the addition of those two words "and politic"?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: The hon. member has been puzzled by that as I have been. It has been handed down through a great many years and I have found it in the oldest books.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I am asking for information.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: I have never found any good reason given for the necessity of it.

Mr. WRIGHT: When I was speaking on the bill before I said I thought the board should be appointed immediately. The minister has said that the proposal is that the chairman be appointed and that two technical men from the department be appointed *pro tempore* as the other members of the board to secure the necessary data with respect to agricultural products, which will be necessary before the board can render any decision. I said then that I thought, and I still think, the other two members of the board should be appointed now, and that there should be a secretariat to obtain information; otherwise the chairman, after you have appointed the permanent members, will be the only member of the board who will have all the figures available. I suggest that it would be wise to adopt this proposal because the board, we hope, will be functioning within a short period of time. I would also suggest, along the lines submitted by the hon. member for Lake Centre, that the board should not be entirely composed of technical men. There should be on it a representative from the producers and one from the consumers with a government chairman. That would give better satisfaction than if you appointed three men for their technical ability.

Section as amended agreed to.

Sections 4 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

On section 8—1931 c. 27 to apply.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the section carry?

Mr. BRYCE: You are going too fast for me, Mr. Chairman. I was waiting until you read the sections. I would like to go back to section 3 if I can have your permission.

An hon. MEMBER: That section was carried.

The CHAIRMAN: With the permission of the committee I will call the section. Section 3, agricultural prices support board.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. BRYCE: I want to ask a question with regard to subsection 9, oath of office. Why is this necessary? We are always asking producers to go on committees. When an organization such as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture or any other producers' organization sends a man to act on such committees the members of that organization want to know what he has been doing and when he comes back, if he has taken an oath of office, he will not tell them what he has been doing. I do not think there is any Canadian sitting on one of these committees who would reveal anything that he should not, but he should be left free to report to the organization that sends him, if the government has sufficient confidence in him to appoint him to the committee.

Mr. GARDINER: Someone says that he might be compelled to make known some things he might not wish to make known. I can assure the hon. member that this is for the direction of the treasury and for some other reasons.

Mr. WRIGHT: This is an important matter. During a war there is excuse for the oath and the promise of secrecy, but during peace time I do not see any reason why a member of an advisory committee appointed to a board should take an oath of secrecy. It is ridiculous in peace time that such a provision should be put in. I can see some sense, in war time under conditions that make it necessary to maintain public morale, that the proceedings of the board should not be made public, but I do not see the force of such a provision in peace time. I think we should have some further explanation.

Mr. GARDINER: This has nothing to do with the members of the advisory committee; it refers to the three members of the board. They are required to take the oath the same as any other employees of the government.

Mr. BRYCE: Advisory committees that have been set up under your department have had to take it.

Mr. GARDINER: They are not compelled to by the passing of this clause, which has reference only to members of the board.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall section 3 carry?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

The CHAIRMAN: We are on section 8.

Mr. HATFIELD: Will this be a new board, or will there be members of the special products board on it?