

*Agricultural Products Board*

whether there is going to be a floor under the prices that the government will pay for agricultural products.

It seems to me that the proposal of my colleague, the hon. member for Assiniboia, is every bit as relevant to this bill as it was to the other one. In fact, I am inclined to the view that it is even more relevant to this bill because this is the one that sets up the board that does the actual purchasing. Therefore, on the ground of relevancy, it seems to me that the amendment is in order. Further, I would say, as Your Honour indicated in the remarks you made when the point was first raised Saturday night, the amendment is also in order in that it comes within the provision of paragraph 657 of Beauchesne's third edition.

**Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, in reply to what has just been said, I would point out that subsection (i) of section 9 of the Agricultural Prices Support Act reads as follows:

(i) to appoint commodity boards or other agents to undertake the purchase and the disposition of agricultural products;

All this reference to it in this act does is to say that if the government agreed that the agricultural prices support board should purchase some commodity under this board, then that may be done. It is just possible that under paragraph (i) no commodities whatsoever would be referred for purchase to this board under the Agricultural Prices Support Act. The question which is relevant to the whole discussion is the one that was raised by the hon. member for Brant-Wentworth (Mr. Charlton) at the beginning of this discussion on second reading, when he wanted to know definitely from the minister whether this board interfered with the activities of boards appointed by the provinces under their legislation. Of course it does not interfere in any way with them. As a matter of fact, I would go on to say that the government has promoted those organizations through discussions with the provinces and otherwise, and has no desire to interfere with them in any way whatsoever.

All that the Agricultural Prices Support Act says is that any agency may be appointed by the board in order to do what it is determined should be done. What my hon. friends are suggesting is that in this act we ought to determine what the agricultural prices board is going to do. That of course is not a matter which could be dealt with in this act. I might suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if you are going to rule that we could go so far afield in this house, on the question of relevancy, as to amend or to propose the amendment of another act, then there is not any limit

that could be put on this discussion at all. The point at which the question of order should have been raised was when the question of action taken under the Agricultural Prices Support Act was first brought into the discussion. If reference is made to the discussions during the consideration of the resolution, I submit that it will be found that that question was raised.

It is obvious that, when one piece of legislation is introduced into this house, it is not the proper thing to do to suggest an amendment to another piece of the legislation which is already on the statute books. The time to amend that legislation is when it is before the house. An attempt was made to do that in the session of 1950, as has been pointed out, and this house voted the resolution down at that time. Now an attempt is being made to have the same amendment to that act discussed under this bill. That of course would be improper. There would be no limitation at all on our discussions in this house, on the question of relevancy, if that procedure were permitted.

**Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre):** In answer to the right hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that one of the powers under section 4, subsection 1(c), is to "buy, sell, or import agricultural products." The amendment provides that in making those purchases provision should be made for the establishment of floor prices at such levels as to guarantee to producers a price-cost relation not less favourable than that prevailing in the period 1943-1945. There can be no amendment more relevant than the one in question which, while it provides that parliament sets up the board, also assures the protection of the producer in that the prices the board shall pay shall bear the relationship set out in the amendment. On the grounds of relevance and applicability I submit that the amendment is in order. Surely we are not attempting to set up a board and to give it the power to do anything, to buy at whatever price at which it desires to buy regardless of the wish of the producers, with absolute powers being given to the board. As I see it, the amendment gives the direction of parliament to the prices that shall be paid by the board.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank hon. members for going into this matter so carefully. I might say that when the amendment was proposed on Saturday night I did say, as the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has stated, that I would hesitate to rule the amendment out of order at this time without at least looking up the amendment moved previously. At that time I was not aware that the amendment that had been moved