

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ROOM 277,

March 24, 1942.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met at 11:00 a.m. The Chairman, Mr. William G. Weir, presided.

There were in attendance:—

The Honourable Mr. James A. MacKinnon, Minister of Trade and Commerce,
Mr. George H. McIvor, Chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board,
Mr. Clive Davidson, Statistician, Canadian Wheat Board,
Mr. C. F. Wilson, Chief of Agricultural Statistics, Department of Trade and Commerce.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now hear from Mr. George McIvor, Chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board. As it is the desire of the committee that all witnesses be sworn I would ask the clerk at this time to administer the oath to Mr. McIvor.

GEORGE H. McIVOR, Chairman, Canadian Wheat Board, called and sworn:

The CHAIRMAN: Now, gentlemen, I have the honour of introducing to you Mr. George McIvor, Chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board. As was indicated yesterday, the subcommittee proposed that Mr. McIvor as well as Mr. Wesson be allowed to make their respective statements without interruption and that they then be subject to questioning by members of the committee. It is with that understanding in mind that I now call on Mr. McIvor to make his statement.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, Honourable Mr. MacKinnon and gentlemen:—

In respect to the wheat question before you there is, broadly speaking, a dividing line between what I will call "policy"—meaning the intent of parliament and the government in respect to the handling of wheat—and "administration". Formulation of general wheat policy in the sense that I have used the term, is a matter for parliament and the government; administration, in accordance with such policy is the function of the board. The Canadian Wheat Board accepts the general policy that is laid down by parliament and the government, and endeavours to carry it out. The wheat board is responsible for the administration of that policy; it reports frequently to the government and makes an annual report which the minister lays upon the table of parliament. The board is ready to answer all questions that may be asked by this committee in respect to its administration. The question of policy as I have defined it, however, is a matter to be dealt with by the government and not by the wheat board.

The Hon. R. B. Hanson, during the course of an address on the wheat problem in the House of Commons on Tuesday, March 17, made the statement that the Canadian Wheat Board had been functioning illegally. Mr. Hanson indicated that the reason for his statement was the fact that the wheat board had been buying wheat in the form of futures contracts from other than producers.