

*Supply—Agriculture*

advance I think they are all of one mind as to what they are going to do. Previous to that I do not think anyone really knew where he was going. Now with the P.F.R.A. the whole thing is under the one engineer and things are going much better.

But I think we should proceed cautiously because the first thing we know we will have Winnipeg on our necks for allowing the water to move down too quickly. I do not think the hon. member has sufficiently stressed the seriousness of the situation. If this river should break its banks and run into the La Salle we will have one of the worst conditions we have ever had.

I have represented this constituency for only three or four years and cannot speak with the experience of a man raised in the district. But I know how serious the situation could be, and I thank the minister for setting aside \$50,000 for this work, whether it is spent on diking or cut-offs according to what the engineers decide is proper. When money gets a little more plentiful in the future I hope the government will be able to provide a bigger vote.

**Mr. Weir:** We will wait for the report.

Item agreed to.

51. To provide for administrative expenses, Agricultural Prices Support Act, 1944, \$92,700.

**Mr. Charlton:** I am not going to take much time, but I should like to ask the minister what products are now being held by the floor prices administration board, the quantities of each, and the total amount of money that has been spent by the board to date.

**Mr. Gardiner:** We have about 15 million pounds of 1952 butter, the value of the 1952 butter paid for being \$5,774,391.79. We have paid for canned pork amounting to \$21,238,277.58, Wiltshire sides amounting to \$5,192,386.22, and beef amounting to \$9,526,750.83. That is a total of \$41,731,806.42.

**Mr. Charlton:** That is the total amount of money spent on the products the minister has mentioned?

**Mr. Gardiner:** That is the investment in the stocks now.

**Mr. Charlton:** To date?

**Mr. Gardiner:** At this time.

**Mr. Charlton:** What is the total amount of money that has been spent up to now?

**Mr. Gardiner:** I think I reported this to the house on a previous occasion this session. The net cost of the operations of the board from the beginning has been a little over \$10 million. That does not involve any net cost in

[Mr. Bryce.]

connection with these products about which I have just been speaking. They may involve something more.

**Mr. Charlton:** The minister gave us the number of pounds of butter but not the number of pounds of pork, Wiltshire sides or beef. He just gave us the value.

**Mr. Gardiner:** There are 37 million pounds of canned pork, 15 million pounds of Wiltshire sides, and 33,900,000 pounds of beef that have been bought, but some of it has been shipped. About 20 million pounds have been shipped.

**Mr. Charlton:** I believe the minister mentioned on his estimates the other night that the price of the canned pork was 63 cents and that it has now come down to 62·8. I wonder how the minister arrived at that figure?

**Mr. Gardiner:** It was 63·8 at first and now it is down to 61·8.

**Mr. Charlton:** It started at 63·8, came down to 62·8 and now it is 61·8. How does the minister arrive at these figures, with pork being purchased at \$25 a hundred dressed weight?

**Mr. Gardiner:** The original figure was 63·8 but the cost at which it is going in now is 61·8, or 2 cents lower.

**Mr. Charlton:** The minister has not answered the question yet. With pork selling at \$25 a hundred dressed weight how is the figure of 61·8 a pound in the can arrived at?

**Mr. Gardiner:** I understand that the lower cost is due to the fact that there is a larger volume passing through. It is the increased volume which makes possible a decrease of 2 cents in the cost when it goes into the can. There is no difference in the price of the pork. Twenty-six cents has been the floor price all the way through, and it has actually been coming in at 26 cents. I do not think there is any other market in which you can get more than that price, and we are getting it at that price.

**Mr. Charlton:** The minister has not answered the question yet. What I asked the minister was how the price of 61·8 cents was arrived at in view of the fact that pork is being purchased at 26 cents a pound dressed weight.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I have already put that on the record three times this session, but I will put it on again. The pork is 26 cents a pound to start with. When you trim off the fat and take out the bone it doubles the price, or did at the beginning, to 52 cents. Half the pork you buy at 26 cents is bone and fat, and by the time you trim that off and get it down to what you are going to put in the can you are only putting in half of the weight of the hog.