

I should be very much surprised if the minister could point to a parallel in any other country.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I do not see that my hon. friend's statement has any bearing on the question. The chairman of the board is a tobacco producer, just as the members of the tree fruit board in British Columbia are also producers of the commodity which is regulated. We were pleased indeed to get the services of Mr. Leitch because of the experience he had had in a practical way in the marketing of this product, and I believe the results to the farmers themselves in the marketing of their tobacco have been eminently satisfactory. They are all on exactly the same basis, the smallest producer on the same basis as the largest producer.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): I am quite sure that the minister has not understood what I have been trying to say, because very obviously from the statement he made this afternoon the chairman of the board is a holder in two syndicates that have certain privileges under the marketing act, privileges which are not enjoyed by people holding lands suitable for growing tobacco but which have not hitherto been devoted to that purpose. The chairman is a holder and owner of a portion of that property, and he has been made by the minister chairman of the marketing board for Canada. I do not want to press the matter. I have nothing against the chairman; I do not know him, but it seems to me this is a terrible condition. I asked this afternoon for the qualifications of the other members of the board, particularly their experience in marketing.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I do not see what bearing the holdings of the chairman of the board would have upon the question unless he was receiving preferences.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): He has the giving of preferences.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Not at all.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): The supervision of the giving of preferences.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The local board is responsible for and has the control of the regulating of the marketing of tobacco in exactly the same way as any other local board set up.

Mr. BROWN: I have a simple question to ask and I want an answer in simple language. Is it possible under this tobacco arrangement which has been set up in the tobacco growing country for a man who has not been hitherto a grower of tobacco to grow and sell tobacco?

[Mr. W. H. Moore.]

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Yes.

Mr. BROWN: Could he sell it apart from the board?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Not within the area.

Mr. BROWN: If a man cannot do that it condemns the whole scheme.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Does the hon. member know how this tobacco is marketed?

Mr. BROWN: That is what I want the minister to tell me.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I do not see how the hon. member can condemn a scheme unless he knows how it operates.

Mr. BROWN: Is it possible for a man who was not hitherto growing tobacco to grow and sell tobacco within that area?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I think I can clear up the hon. member's difficulty. In the marketing of the crop in 1934 a number of producers, a number of shippers and a number of buyers were on the board. The buyers set up an appraisal committee which went around the district to appraise the crop of each producer. The producers also set up a committee which also appraised the crops. The men representing the producers and the men representing the buyers met with this information in front of them and after discussion and bargaining it was agreed that a certain average price should be paid for all the tobacco. Every producer, whether he had or had not previously produced, could sell his tobacco to any buyer and any buyer could purchase from any individual as cheaply as he could, but it was understood that the whole crop was to bring in a certain amount of money. For instance, buyer A might buy tobacco from a number of farmers at different prices and find that the total price paid was \$100,000 less than the appraised value. In such a case that \$100,000 would be divided on a poundage basis among the farmers who had sold their tobacco to that buyer and this might work out at ten per cent for each farmer. Farmer A might have sold his tobacco at 23 cents per pound while farmer B had received 30 cents per pound; they each would receive an additional ten per cent. The result was that instead of large quantities of tobacco being left and the market being in a chaotic state, ninety per cent of the crop was disposed of within three weeks of the time this arrangement had been made and for prices considerably higher than those received last year. Each man was permitted to sell his own tobacco but all the producers were protected by the collective bargaining power which they had.