

Egg and Hog Grading

3. Is the order of merit and rank strictly followed by the Civil Service Commission in making appointments from the eligible lists available?

FEDERAL DEPUTY MINISTERS

Mr. CHEVRIER:

1. How many deputy ministers, including persons with the rank of deputy minister, are there in the public service of Canada?

2. How many deputy ministers have been retired since August 7, 1930?

3. How many deputy ministers have died since August 7, 1930?

4. What is the total amount paid annually, or to be paid on termination of retiring leave, as annuities to deputy ministers retired since August 7, 1930?

5. What are the total annual salaries, including deductions, paid to the deputy ministers appointed to replace those retired since August 7, 1930?

EGG AND HOG GRADING ACTS

Mr. F. H. PICKEL (Brome Missisquoi) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the Egg and Hog Grading Acts should be amended.

He said: In bringing this resolution before the house I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not averse to the grading of farm produce provided the farmer is not exploited in the operation. If the farmer is properly safeguarded I am decidedly in favour of the grading of farm produce, with the idea of improving the quality. The farmer does not desire to have impossible regulations and restrictions imposed against the middleman who undoubtedly plays a very important role in the economic life of the farmer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. PICKEL: I agree that he is justly entitled to reasonable remuneration for his services so performed.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is desirable that hon. members preserve better order. When one conversation is going on it is bad enough but with fifty it is difficult for the member speaking to make himself heard.

Mr. PICKEL: It would be almost impossible, Mr. Speaker, for the farmer to-day to make the necessary contact with the consumer to dispose of his goods if it were not for the intervention of the middleman. But I do not think it is necessary that the middleman should make a fortune in a year or two while the farmer is forced to a lifelong struggle for a mere existence. This pathetic and unbearable plight of the farmer did not spring up overnight, it has been coming on for a long time—for many years. Much time

[Mr. St-Père.]

has been occupied in this chamber in discussing this problem of the betterment of the farmers' position. Much valuable time has been lost in the futile debates that have taken place here simply because hon. members did not and do not realize or fully appreciate the grievous burdens under which the farmer is compelled to labour. Apparently many hon. members consider that if the agriculture estimates are increased continuously and consistently from year to year, that is about all that can be done for the farmers. This attitude of mind was well evidenced in the speech delivered by the hon. member for St. Johns-Iberville (Mr. Rhéaume) on the debate on the address. The farmer need not expect much assistance from members of his mentality. In the case of this hon. gentleman, however, nothing much else could be expected because he is a distributor, and later I will have more to say about that phase of the question. Much can be done by this government to assist the farmer and enable him to get back on the road to prosperity, without the expenditure of a great deal of money. Legislation could be and should be enacted at once to regulate the orderly marketing of the products of the farm.

It is not my intention, sir, to criticize the intricate framework of these two grading acts, but I should like to point out to the house some methods by which the products of the farmers are put right into the hands of the packers and commission men. Let us take first the Hog Grading Act and look at its inner workings. The hog grader is a government employee, but he never comes in contact with the producer. He lives with the packer; they are bosom friends; they are pals, and he is going to do anything he can to help his pal. The hogs are sent to a central point for grading, where they are looked after and graded and where the price is set by people whose object is to make the price and grade just as low as possible. I should like to cite one or two instances to indicate the hardships that have been worked on our farmers, and I could mention scores of cases of this kind. In one of the best swine counties in this dominion, where they have spent a good deal of time and money on their stock, from 1922 to May 1, 1932, one dealer averaged one or two carloads a week; probably over the whole period he would have shipped between 12,000 and 15,000 hogs. Out of that number he had two selects. Another dealer took in a load of about 45 hogs to Montreal. He took them to the abattoir, and one of the graders who came around stepped in amongst the hogs and