

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know what the difficulty is with the minister. He was very anxious to have the committee called to sit this morning but he has not yet appeared.

Mr. ROSS: Would there be any objection to our asking questions relating to the 1943-44, and the 1944-45 reports? We are very anxious to go into certain aspects of them.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you want to go into a discussion of those?

Mr. McIVOR: I might say that the 1943-44 crop was before the last committee. As to the 1944-45 and the 1945-46 reports, as far as the wheat board is concerned, we are quite prepared to proceed in any way the committee may wish.

Mr. LEGER: Mr. Chairman, I believe our report deals specifically with the report for 1945-46. I do not know that we can go beyond that unless we obtain the permission of the House.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand, from what Mr. Wright says that the minister said he was quite prepared to do that. If he is agreeable, we certainly have no objection from Mr. McIvor to questions being asked.

Now, before we call on Mr. McIvor as a witness, he has a short statement to make. I think we will have that now.

George H. McIvor, Chief Commissioner, The Canadian Wheat Board, called:

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee—

Mr. LEGER: I believe that on page 7 you will see there is a reference here to the 1943-44 and the 1944-45 crop years; that will give us an opportunity of discussing what is contained in the reports to which the other members have just referred.

The CHAIRMAN: We will do that, Mr. Leger. Now I would like to ask Mr. McIvor to make his statement, and then we will get on with his presentation.

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen; many of you will remember that Mr. Findlay has been a very important witness before this committee on several occasions. I regret very much to say that Mr. Findlay was taken to the hospital last night at five o'clock and he is very, very ill. The doctor has not yet had time to determine what the difficulty is but it may be a brain haemorrhage or perhaps a tumor of the brain. I talked to the doctor this morning and he said his condition was slightly improved overnight. The doctor remained in the hospital all night and gave Mr. Findlay intravenous treatments. This, of course, has upset us all a great deal. Mrs. Findlay has been sent for and will be here at noon to-day; she is flying down here from Winnipeg.

As you all know, Mr. Findlay has been associated with the wheat board, and previously with the stabilization operations under Mr. John Macfarland. In Mr. Macfarland's time he was treasurer; and he continued as treasurer under the operations of Mr. Macfarland's board. He came to our board in 1937-38 and he became comptroller of the board around the time of the outbreak of the war, in 1939. In the main he has been responsible for the records of the board, and I am sure you all appreciate the tremendous amount of work and the responsibility which he has as comptroller and the strain he has been under over these years. How much that may have contributed to his present condition I do not know. We have the auditors here, Mr. McVey and Mr. Earl, and they are going to undertake to carry on the work for Mr. Findlay. I might say that it has not been easy because they have had to go over all the reports, which they did during the night; but I am quite sure they will do the very best they can in the circumstances.