

Agricultural Products Board

providing stability for the hog producer. A situation like that is most unsatisfactory. The government has a floor price on hogs of \$32.50 a hundredweight for Wiltshire sides.

Mr. Gardiner: May I ask the hon. member a question? Why does he not finish the story? Why does he not give us the price for last week and this week?

An hon. Member: He does not know.

Mr. Argue: The minister can do that, and I doubt very much whether he will find that the price has gone up very much. I have not checked the papers recently.

Mr. Gardiner: The price went up a cent each week.

Mr. Argue: I have not checked the papers for a few days, but when I looked at the last quotation in the *Winnipeg Free Press* in the reading room some two days ago that is exactly what the figures were. If the minister has any later figures that have come from Winnipeg in the last two or three days I will accept them, but I am certain that they are not much higher than the \$26.50 I have quoted.

Mr. Gardiner: The price went up a cent last week and another cent this week.

Mr. Argue: That is fine; that puts the price back to where it was in the last week of October, so the 30 per cent drop is now a 25 per cent drop. The price of hogs is going up and down so fast that I cannot keep track of it. Neither can the farmer keep track of it, so finally he throws up his hands and says: "I do not know what I am going to get for my hogs, but I still think I might just as well go out of hog production". There is no encouragement for hog production when the minister and the government have set the floor price so low that the price of hogs can drop to \$26.50 a hundredweight; and that is for dressed carcasses, not for Wiltshire sides.

As the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Bryce) has said before in the house, the price to the consumer has not changed at all. The fact that the price to the farmers has gone down in the short period of a few months from 25 to 30 per cent no doubt caused the farmers union of Manitoba, as reported in the *Ottawa Citizen* of December 13, to call upon the government for an immediate investigation into the Canadian packing industry with a view to its nationalization. The farmers union of Manitoba is fed up with the packing industry that encourages this type of price fluctuation, and asks the government for an investigation into that

industry with a view to nationalization. The Canadian Press dispatch goes on as follows:

The resolution claimed present prices paid farmers for livestock have "not brought a like downward trend in the price of meat to consumers of whom we are a part."

There was no benefit to the consumer, even though the price to the producer went down 30 per cent. There is no stability for the egg producer. There is no stability for the bacon producer. We can produce more eggs in Canada; we can produce more bacon; we can produce more food of all kinds; and surely at this time when we are engaged in a world-wide struggle with communism, one of the best things we could do to sell our democratic way of life to nations throughout the world would be to provide food supplies to the best of our ability to underdeveloped countries.

I received a very interesting answer, I thought, to a question I placed on the order paper on November 4. The question read as follows:

What was the quantity and value, in each month, of wheat, other grains, livestock, agricultural machinery, industrial machinery, and any other commodities made available to (a) each country under the Colombo plan, since its inception; (b) any other country, by way of economic assistance, during the past eighteen months.

To me that looked like a pretty complicated question, and I had no doubt the government departments would have to go to a lot of work to dig up all these statistics in detail. Therefore I said nothing in the house as to why the answer to that question was delayed. The question was asked on November 4; the answer came down on December 11, some five or six weeks later. What was the answer? It reads:

Under the Colombo plan the only definite commitment so far made was to India for wheat to the total value of \$10 million.

The answer to that question was known immediately I put the question on the order paper. It was a short answer, and could have been made within forty-eight hours. The answer goes on:

This leaves \$5 million available to India in this fiscal year. The other obligation is to Pakistan to which country \$10 million has been allotted this year.

To the other part of the question the answer is:

Ten million dollars loaned to the government of the United Kingdom under the provisions of the United Kingdom Financial Agreement Act, 1946.

In other words, even though Canada is capable of producing much larger quantities of foodstuffs of all kinds than we are producing at the present time, the government does not give encouragement to our agricultural producers through proper floor price legislation, and does little or nothing in the