

they exist. The initial advance may be \$1 in one year and 75 cents in the next, and 50 cents in the next. But under the act it is contemplated that the advance will be fixed on a basis which will enable the wheat board to market the crops without recourse to the treasury.

Mr. SENN: It is not always done.

Mr. CRERAR: That is the principle implicit in the wheat board act; and if my hon. friend will read the speeches made by members of the government of that day, of which he was a supporter—made at the time the measure was passed—I am sure he will find I am correct.

This measure is not based upon that principle. It is based upon another principle, namely that a floor should be established on these agricultural products so that if the price goes down the board will purchase and protect the producers with the floor price; whether a profit or loss results, the government has to carry it.

As my colleague the Minister of Agriculture has said, such powers are broad enough. I am not sure but that recourse could be had to participation payments. And certainly if experience showed that it were desirable and the powers were not there, parliament at a future date could consider it. I think however that my hon. friend should clear up the question I have asked.

Mr. WRIGHT: I will clear it up so far as I am concerned. I think we are establishing a floor on agricultural prices, and that that floor may amount to a loss to the treasury of Canada. I should say that if the government is going to establish floor prices it must accept the principle that the people of Canada as a whole may have to carry a loss in establishing those floor prices.

Mr. CRERAR: This measure accepts that principle.

Mr. WRIGHT: No, it does not accept that principle, according to what the Minister of Mines and Resources has just said. He has just said we must not have a loss under this bill.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. CRERAR: No.

Mr. WRIGHT: The minister has said that the wheat board proposes to level out the price.

Mr. CRERAR: My hon. friend is quite wrong, and he is also evading the question I asked him. This measure establishes a floor price on a commodity, for instance, such as

[Mr. Crerar.]

alfalfa seed. Now, if in taking over that product at the floor price the board incurs a loss in the disposition of the product, such loss, under the principle of this bill, is borne by the treasury. Surely there can be no dispute about that? But my hon. friend's contention goes farther than that. He says that if in a subsequent year a profit results, that is if alfalfa seed is held and a profit results from the sale of it, the additional profit should be paid to the producer. And I am asking him how, if that principle is to be adopted, he can justly argue that the taxpayers shall bear the loss.

Mr. WRIGHT: The minister is trying to argue that the floor price they will establish will be a ceiling price also. That is, he is going to establish a floor price low enough to make sure he is not going to take a loss.

Mr. CRERAR: No; may I correct my hon. friend. I would call his attention to section 9(2) which states:

In prescribing prices under paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection one of this section, the board shall endeavour to ensure adequate and stable returns for agriculture by promoting orderly adjustment from war to peace conditions and shall endeavour to secure a fair relationship between the returns from agriculture and those from other occupations.

That is the principle of the bill, the principle which guides the conduct of the board in establishing prices.

Mr. WRIGHT: Yes; and when I moved an amendment on Saturday night with respect to this matter, leaving out the word "endeavour" and substituting the word "shall", the government refused to accept it. Therefore I say the government, so far as I can see, under this bill intend to establish floor prices at such a low level that they know they are not going to take any loss.

Mr. GARDINER: I cannot let that pass without saying something. The hon. member for Melfort is in the habit of getting up and making statements he knows are not right.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, and I know I am unparliamentary in that statement, and I know I shall have to withdraw it immediately, but I am going to say it.

Mr. COLDWELL: That is not proper procedure for a member in the house, to say something which he knows he will have to withdraw immediately. Surely that reflects very badly upon the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. GARDINER: And at the same time I can ask my hon. friend to withdraw the statement he just made. There is no such