

*Agricultural Products Board***AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS BOARD**

TO PRESCRIBE THE CONSTITUTION AND POWERS OF THE BOARD, AND TO PROVIDE FOR NECESSARY EXPENDITURES

The house resumed, from Saturday, December 15, consideration of the motion of Mr. Gardiner for the second reading of Bill No. 18, to provide for the establishment of an agricultural products board.

Mr. P. E. Wright (Melfort): Mr. Speaker, when the house rose on Saturday we were discussing a point of order. I should like to make a submission with respect thereto before you rule whether or not the amendment of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) is in order. The operative section of the bill is section 4. Subsection 1 (a) reads as follows:

... the board may, with the authority of the governor in council and under the direction of the minister (a) sell or deliver agricultural products to the government of any country . . . and for these purposes may purchase agricultural products and make such arrangements for the purchase, sale or delivery of agricultural products as it considers necessary . . .

Subsection 1 (c) provides that the board may "buy, sell, or import agricultural products". Subsection 3 reads as follows:

Except with the approval of the governor in council, the board shall not sell an agricultural product pursuant to paragraph (a) or (c) of subsection 1 at a price lower than the purchase price thereof plus handling, storage and transportation costs.

It sets a floor under which the board may not sell these particular agricultural products. Subsection 5 reads as follows:

(5) The board may, when so appointed under paragraph (i) of subsection one of section nine of the Agricultural Prices Support Act, 1944, undertake the purchase and the disposition of agricultural products for the purposes of that act.

All that the amendment of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) does is to place in this section of the act a floor similar to that which subsection 3 places under sales made under (a) and (c) of subsection 1. I would therefore argue that the amendment is in order.

Mr. Victor Quelch (Acadia): Mr. Speaker, I think the amendment should be considered to be in order because this act is definitely governed by the Agricultural Prices Support Act.

Some hon. Members: Louder.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Quelch: I was saying that I think the amendment should be considered to be in order because this act is definitely governed by the Agricultural Prices Support Act. The

[Mr. Claxton.]

point was referred to by the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. Wright). Subsection 5 of section 4 of the bill reads as follows:

The board may, when so appointed under paragraph (i) of subsection one of section nine of the Agricultural Prices Support Act, 1944, undertake the purchase and the disposition of agricultural products for the purposes of that act.

The point is this. At what price will these goods be bought? We want a formula to be inserted in section 9 of the Agricultural Prices Support Act which will definitely state that the same price relationship will be maintained today as existed from 1943-45. If that is not done, in supporting this act we are really buying a pig in a poke. We do not know what the price will be. Therefore I presume that if this amendment carried, the government would then give consideration to placing a formula in section 9 of the Agricultural Prices Support Act. It is all very well for the Minister of Agriculture to say that by regulation they have established a formula; but that regulation may be changed overnight. On the other hand, if we have legislation outlining the formula, we will then know at least that that formula will exist until such time as parliament may decide to rescind it.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might say a further word on the point of order. From what Your Honour said the other evening when the point was first raised by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), I take it that at that time you felt that you would hesitate to rule the amendment out of order. Nevertheless the Minister of Agriculture later sought to make a point; and lest you be giving any consideration to the minister's point I think we should have it perfectly clear.

The Minister of Agriculture sought to make the point that the last time this type of amendment was proposed was to the motion for the second reading of a bill amending the Agricultural Prices Support Act. The inference in that comment would naturally be that this amendment is relevant to the other bill but not to this one. As both the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. Wright) and the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Quelch) have pointed out, the question of what prices products will be bought at by this board is distinctly and definitely relevant to the bill which is now before us. Surely that is obvious. As a matter of fact, as I read the two acts under consideration, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that it is more under this bill than under the other one that the principle of giving support to farm prices is carried out. If we are going to know whether this bill is worth anything, we should know