

Supply—Agriculture

to lime assistance, and it is available to all farmers who use it. It has been explained in the discussion on the main estimates every year. However, if my hon. friend wishes to have the full explanation, I am prepared to give it to him.

Lime is fundamental in maintaining the fertility of a large portion of farm land in Canada where the soil tends to become acid. Most of the soil in Newfoundland, the maritime provinces, Quebec, some districts of Ontario and the coastal region of British Columbia is of this type. Without adequate and continuous liming the productivity of such soil is relatively poor and farming becomes unprofitable. The provinces participating in the policy include Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. These provinces are subsidized to the extent of sixty per cent of the total amount expended by the provinces for any direct activity in increasing lime utilization for soil amendment purposes, subject to a maximum of \$1.50 per ton on lime distributed in the province. This year the maximum subsidy increased from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per ton. This, with increased freight rates and the increased use of agricultural lime in Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario, renders the \$500,000 voted by parliament for the fiscal year 1953-54 insufficient to cover the federal government's share under its arrangement with the provinces.

Of the \$85,000 requested in this supplementary vote the provinces would be paid approximately as follows:

Newfoundland	
Prince Edward Island .....	\$12,000
Nova Scotia .....	13,000
New Brunswick .....	13,000
Quebec .....	26,000
Ontario .....	14,000
British Columbia .....	7,000

I do not have the figure for Newfoundland.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** I understand that the total vote for the current year will be half a million dollars?

**Mr. Abbott:** It is \$585,000 altogether. This is supplementary to the original vote of half a million dollars.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** Has the government given consideration to extending the policy of assistance in regard to fertilizers? I might bring to his attention the fact that fertilizer prices have been increased in Canada to a point where, today, in western Canada, in the three prairie provinces ammonium phosphate fertilizer sells at \$120 a ton. There is a real need either to have the government look into the fertilizer industry, with a view to bringing fertilizer costs down, so that we can have

more use of them, so that the fertility of our soil will be retained, or the government should investigate the whole matter and undertake either to bring the price of fertilizers in line with farmers' costs of production, or extend the policy of subsidization.

I would bring to the minister's attention that this would not be the first time that governments have undertaken subsidization of fertilizers for the agricultural industry. In Great Britain they do it. And in many other countries. I suggest this is a matter which should be given attention by the government.

**Mr. Abbott:** I will see that it is brought to the minister's attention.

Item agreed to.

551. Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act and water storage—further amount required, \$139,600.

**Mr. Castleden:** Could the minister give the names of the smaller projects included in the amount of \$81,000, as set out at page 15?

**Mr. Abbott:** There is the Hogue dam, \$31,000; Neepawa dam, \$25,000; and Pheasant creek, \$25,000.

Item agreed to.

552. Major irrigation and reclamation projects in the prairie provinces—further amount required, \$230,207.

**Mr. Quelch:** What projects was this money paid out for?

**Mr. Abbott:** This is supplementary to the big vote, and was paid out in connection with the Bow River project.

**Mr. Knowles:** How could it be paid out before it is voted?

**Mr. Abbott:** It may have been paid out, because in some cases we can provide for these items by a transfer of allotment. However, it can always be done by a supplementary vote. I think however that this has not been paid. It was a slip of the tongue on my part.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** I would like to ask if any of this vote is for the Moosomin project?

**Mr. Abbott:** No, it is all for the Bow River project.

Item agreed to.

553. Estimated amount required to recoup the agricultural prices support account to cover the net operating loss of the agricultural prices support board during the fiscal year 1953-54, including authority to credit to the account the net revenue received into the agricultural products board account from the sale of New Zealand meat received in exchange for beef shipped to the United Kingdom, \$37,758,894.