

*Agricultural Products Act*

ably we utilized the services of the one on the island as well, but in any case we utilized the services of those from Vancouver to Moncton. The great majority of those packing plants belonged to three different companies: Burns, Canada Packers and Swift. But quite a number of them belonged to others. There are in Canada packing plants that never have delivered any bacon or ham to Great Britain either before, during, or since the war. There were times during the war when you could get more for your pork products delivered in Canada than you could sell them for delivered to Great Britain under the contract; and of course there was a temptation to those who never had delivered under the contract to charge the limit which they could charge, and which they might have charged had there been no controls which said that there is a certain ceiling and you must abide by it. There were others who would have much preferred to go out during that period of time and build up a home market in this country at a time when other packing houses were supplying all the needed product to a market across the seas.

But under this act we had authority to go into each of those plants and take out whatever percentage of the commodity we desired to take out, and to say to any company or to any packing plant: You must deliver such and such amounts of bacon and ham, or of Wiltshire sides, to the board, to be shipped over to Great Britain. The very fact that we had that authority made it unnecessary for us ever to use it, Mr. Speaker; I do not think we ever used that authority. But I am quite satisfied that, if we had never had that authority, there would have been quite a number who would not have acted in just exactly the manner in which they did act. That was not only our opinion. It was the opinion of ninety per cent of those who were in the business. So we had the authority; the authority was there. Everyone knew it was there. That authority is still in this measure. But everyone knows that, so long as the emergencies which still exist in the world today continue, every one of those plants is going to deliver without anybody forcibly going in and taking the commodity, when that commodity is necessary in order to carry out the undertakings which we have given.

Someone may ask me: Are you going to do it? I am not going to say that we are not going to do it, because that in itself would take away the effect from the measures themselves. I am going to say that we do not expect that we shall have to use the powers that are given to us in these measures. But in order to see to it that the products are

delivered where they ought to be delivered and when they ought to be delivered, we believe that it is necessary to have that authority under these measures.

I am also going to say this. In spite of some of the things that were said in the house I think that the leader of the opposition this afternoon was really discussing the issue which is before us. He wanted to know whether there was an emergency sufficient to warrant the passing of this legislation at the present time. I think that is a question which any member of this house has a right to ask. I hope I have said sufficient tonight to indicate that we believe there is still existing an emergency growing out of the war, and that if we are to be able to deal with it we must have the authority which this kind of a measure gives to us for dealing with it.

Then when you ask the further question: Are you going to take away from the provinces for a while longer some of the authority which our constitution gives to them, in order to apply that authority in a manner which will make it possible to carry out the undertakings that we have given to others and have given to our own farmers, then I answer that question by saying yes, Mr. Speaker. Under this legislation we are asking that we be given the right for another year to take some of the authority which, under our constitution, as applying to peacetime, when there is no emergency, rests entirely with the provinces, and that we should have the right to utilize that authority in order to see to it that the intent of our people is carried out. In that intent I couple the necessity of supplying food to others—the growing necessity which will be there to supply it even beyond the year 1949-50. Along with that consideration I couple the fact that it is due to the farmers of this country that we have legislation such as this on our statute books throughout the transitional period in order that the house may see to it that the whole population of Canada pays back some of what my hon. friends over on the other side of the house have been talking about ever since this debate began.

Ever since this house held its first sitting in this session, member after member has been getting up and saying: Why should the farmer carry the whole load? What I am saying to this house tonight is that the government does not believe that the farmer should carry the whole load. We have arrived at the time when, unless we are going to make an effort to have Canada carry part of the load, we must throw our farmers on other markets and put them in the position of having to take a lower price than they can get under these contracts, and a lower price than