

kind was set up. It is not the intention behind this bill to insist upon that kind of organization.

Mr. COLDWELL: This amendment, as I see it, does not insist upon that. All it insists upon is that the producer—the primary producer—shall be included on that board, or represented there. It does not necessarily force producers to set up cooperatives. It would encourage them to organize so as to have representation on a board so set up.

Mr. GARDINER: But if we strike out all the words after the word "commodity boards", there are no other organizations than commodity boards which can handle certain products. That would not be the intention of the bill. If there were no other kinds of agencies handling products, it would be all right; but a very considerable part—probably by far the greater part—of farm products produced in Canada are handled in some other way. It is not our intention simply to reconstitute the whole business set up in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe the amendment changes the intention of the bill, because the words "other agents" are excluded.

Mr. PERLEY: In my view this is a good amendment. When we leave the words "or other agents" in there we make the section pretty wide. Agents might be organized by a company to work in cooperation with this commodity board, and it would be giving too much power altogether. I certainly support the amendment, because it gives a chance to have the primary producer represented on commodity boards.

Mr. GARDINER: I am sure if my hon. friend really understood this paragraph he would not be in favour of the amendment. I doubt very much if the greater part of farm produce in any community could be handled at all if we were to follow this amendment. It would mean that before we could take delivery of any farm product, through a commodity board, that board would have to be one on which there is farm representation; that is, a representative of the primary producers. That means that we would have to have primary producer representation on a board before we could take delivery of products. I do not think we want to start out by insisting upon every little community in Canada having an organization of that kind before we could take the products from that community. We should have it open, so that we can say, "Here is the floor price; it does not matter to whom the farmer delivers the products. That organization is in a position

to take delivery of those products at a price, and turn it over to the government at that price, or to do what the government says ought to be done with it." They become the agencies of the government to conduct the transaction.

I would quite agree that where there is a considerable cooperative organization of producers, that organization ought to be the agency, and it would be one of the agencies that would do the job. There should be no other representation. The farmer should have the privilege of delivering to the cooperative or to anyone else and getting the same price. He should not be compelled to deliver to some particular agency in order to obtain the price.

Mr. PERLEY: I think this amendment would set up boards which would carry out the principle of the Natural Products Marketing Act. It would give the farmers the power to organize and to have some say.

Mr. GARDINER: They can do that, but we are not compelling them to do it.

Mr. PERLEY: I think that is the principle the hon. member for Melfort wants embodied in this subsection.

Mr. GARDINER: As my hon. friend will recall, the first suggestion in connection with the marketing act was just that. Votes were taken in the provinces and the votes were against it. The votes taken in the three prairie provinces were against being compelled to do that and the compulsory feature was taken out of that act. Under that act the government was not guaranteeing anything, but under this measure we are undertaking to provide floor prices. We guarantee the price to the farmer and we say to him, "In order to get this commodity into the channels of trade or into storage, certain agencies will be appointed or designated in addition to the commodity boards, if we set up commodity boards, in order to carry out the activity.

Mr. PERLEY: I think the minister has put a wrong interpretation upon the Natural Products Marketing Act. They appointed a farmers' committee.

Mr. GARDINER: When the bill was first framed a vote was taken in the three western provinces to see whether they wanted it compulsory or optional, and the vote was that it should be optional. When the bill was brought down it was optional. The suggestion here is that we compel them to market their products through the agencies upon which there is producer representation. I do not think we should go that far.

Mr. REID: The amendment before the committee deals entirely with wheat growing.