

## Supply—Agriculture

The principle underlying the system that was put into effect was that there are always the poor grades. In the days I was speaking of in Ontario we picked our apples, piled them in heaps under the trees, and the packers came along and picked out the best. The rest were left there and we were not able to sell them at all. There has been a tendency in recent years to want to sell all the apples that grow. This tendency may not apply so much to British Columbia as it does to some other parts of the country, because British Columbia growers have been noted for the careful way in which they pack their apples. Nevertheless there has been a tendency in that direction, both with regard to apples and with regard to potatoes.

The indication in this is that there should be a market provided for the grades of apples for human consumption as fresh fruit or fruit to be used for cooking purposes and otherwise, and that some of the other grades should be eliminated from that class. The inclination here is to support the higher grades rather than try to support everything that grows in a particular season. I think the plan could be improved upon and could probably be put into a position where it would provide better assistance than it did during the last year. Nevertheless it cost us \$181,738 to put it into effect this last year.

**Mr. Charlton:** Mr. Chairman, I am not following up the question of apples but rather the general matter of support prices. It is not my intention to delay the passing of this item, but I feel something should be said regarding certain aspects of this legislation. The fact that we let this amount go through is not to be taken as suggesting in any way that we are all in favour of the government's action under this legislation.

I do want to bring one matter to the minister's attention, and I think probably the government will be doing something about it this session. I refer to the amendments to the Agriculture Products Marketing Act which have been requested by the Ontario government and the producer organizations. I am sure the government will have time during this session to introduce these amendments. If they do, I can assure them that if they are the amendments requested they will have no difficulty getting them through so far as this part of the house is concerned.

I feel the producer organizations are to be commended for their attitude toward this self-help program they are trying to adopt. I think they are to be commended for all the work they have done along these lines. I feel they deserve all the support and cooperation this government can give by seeing

that the legislation requested is introduced. We are not taking the time of the house to discuss this matter now because we assume the agriculture estimates will be before us at a later time. We hope this item will go through so the government will have time to bring forward that marketing legislation that we think is so important to the farmers of this country.

**Mr. Jones:** I wish to add my voice to that of my colleague the hon. member for Kootenay West on behalf of the British Columbia tree fruit growers. I believe the difficulties these people are facing have been brought up here several times, especially in the last few years. The growers themselves have requested the department for some assistance to overcome the losses as a result of the recent frosts. The statement made by my colleague was that the fruit growers did not get equal or nearly equal treatment as compared to the other sections of our agricultural economy. I agree with him. I believe the fruit growers are entitled to just as good a deal as the wheat growers of the prairies. I do not begrudge the wheat farmers the help they are receiving, but I think the fruit growers of British Columbia should get equal treatment.

At the present time the fruit growers of British Columbia are making a very modest request; that is, for assistance to the extent of 25 cents a box. I know quite well that the price the minister mentioned just now of 1 cent a pound or roughly 40 cents a box for apples is not a price upon which the growers could grow rich. It is not realistic so far as British Columbia is concerned, because our highest grade apples cost up to \$2 to produce.

Last year a lot of our apples were diverted to the cider plant or the fruit juice plant. As the minister knows, the apples turned over to these plants bring very little return to the growers. It is not a profitable venture so far as the growers are concerned because they have to take the fruit to these plants and usually have to wait some time before receiving any return at all. I feel that this year particularly, as a result of the small crop and the high cost of processing that crop, the high cost of the facilities that are there for 10 million boxes while this year we had roughly 4 million, increasing the cost per box immeasurably, should suggest to the minister that the growers are very modest in their request. They are only asking for 25 cents a box.

I hope he will see his way clear to implementing that request this year. I can see that the amount cannot be included in the present estimates, but I hope he will bring in a supplementary estimate to cover aid to British