

It was considered rather in this light, that some steps had to be taken to put the scheme before the people interested. At first consideration was given as to whether or not the dominion marketing board themselves should engage speakers to go through the provinces and put the scheme that was under consideration before the people. But it was felt that it was only fair that those who had put so much into the scheme in the way of preparing it, and who had held preliminary meetings, should be advanced money to pay for the use of halls and to pay their expenses in holding meetings to forward the scheme, with the distinct understanding that on all occasions every opportunity would be given to people who were opposed to the scheme to present their side of the case.

Mr. VENIOT: At their own expense?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Every advantage was taken of this by those who were opposed to the scheme. At the great majority of these meetings, if not all, questions were asked by people who were there and in many cases questions were submitted by an organized opposition to the scheme. It was our first experience in this connection, and because of the more or less experimental nature of it we feel that the thing was lived up to in a very fair way.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I have been reading the return furnished by the minister to me in connection with the payments made to lecturers. Some ninety were engaged in Alberta, and a considerable number of them were just about as competent to talk about poultry pools as I am. I can imagine the kind of answer they would give when asked about the operation of a poultry pool. If these lecturers had known something about the poultry business perhaps they would have got along better. I am not going to prolong the discussion, but I would ask the minister if he intends to use any part of this money now being voted for a similar purpose. I do not care what he calls it; I call it propaganda. If it is to be used in the same way then I want to register an objection and vote against it. If it is to be used purely for marketing purposes and the assistance that the department can and should render in marketing natural products both abroad and at home, it is all right. But if it is to be expended as the grant to which I have referred was expended in western Canada, it will not meet with my approval.

Progress reported.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

SUPPLY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Morand in the chair.

Natural Products Marketing Act, 1934, \$545,500.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Mr. Chairman, when the committee rose at six o'clock some questions remained unanswered. At this time I shall endeavour to answer the hon. members for Gloucester (Mr. Veniot) and West Edmonton (Mr. Stewart). I realize that the hon. member for Gloucester has a keen interest in the matter, and is specially concerned with the eastern potato marketing board. As he stated at the conclusion of his remarks he is anxious to obtain the facts and is particularly anxious that the information be placed before the producers in advance of the vote to be taken in connection with the scheme on some date before July 10. The exact date has not yet been set.

The reason the scheme was put into effect without a vote was the abnormal conditions existing in connection with the marketing of potatoes grown in the maritimes and the province of Ontario, brought about by the fact that in the past year there was a very heavy potato crop. The year 1932 could be considered as a normal crop year; in 1933 the crop was rather short and in 1934 it was very heavy. No price of any value to the growers of potatoes could be obtained. Finding themselves confronted with this difficulty the growers got together and endeavoured by united effort to ascertain whether or not through the provisions of the marketing act they might overcome the objections of a few members—few certainly in comparison to the number who were willing voluntarily to agree—and arrive at some control of the quantities of potatoes being placed on the market. The result was that a number of meetings were held in the different provinces, and the views expressed at those meetings, in the opinion of the Dominion Marketing Board, represented a fair picture of the views held by the majority of producers. At eight meetings held in the province of Prince Edward Island, with a total attendance estimated at 1,000, only one member voiced opposition. In Nova Scotia, at six meetings with an attendance of 127, there were no voices opposed; in New Brunswick there were eighteen meetings which 386 attended, there being opposition at two meetings. In Ontario there were sixteen meet-