

Supply—Agriculture

Research branch—

5. Branch administration including Canada's fee for membership in the international society for horticultural science and \$139,045 for grants in aid of agricultural research in universities and other scientific organizations in Canada, \$1,899,219.

(Translation):

Mr. Boulanger: Mr. Chairman, on item 5, I should like to say a few words about markets for our agricultural products. The hon. member for Maisonneuve-Rosemont (Mr. Deschatelets) delivered a fine speech about research and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Hamilton) himself commended him for it.

I should like, however, to add a few words concerning market research for agricultural products. I feel that the prosperity of our agriculture will depend on our exports to other countries.

Some time ago, I read certain publications where it was mentioned that the British market was quite extensive, but that we were not taking full advantage of it as far as Canadian exports are concerned. For instance—the latest figures I have are for 1957—it is stated that Denmark exported 249,000 tons of meat to the United Kingdom, Holland, 16,000 tons, Poland, 49,000 tons and other countries also exported 39,000 tons of meat, while Canada exported 832 tons.

I feel that in the matter of research, the government should make every effort to expand our markets.

With regard to dairy products, last year, that is in 1959, British imports of dairy products reached \$511 million, tobacco products, \$228 million, fruits and vegetables, \$633 million, while the Canadian contribution was only 2½ per cent in the case of dairy products, 0.9 per cent in the case of tobacco products and 0.7 per cent in the case of fruits and vegetables.

Since the Canadian government maintains rather close relations with the United Kingdom, I fail to understand why we cannot increase our exports to that country.

As for the studies and research the minister intends to undertake during the coming year, that is in 1961-62, since this item in the estimates has gone up by 28 per cent, I would ask that export markets be given prime consideration. This is our only hope to achieve a prosperous, an expanding agriculture.

(Text):

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Chairman, I should like to tell the hon. member that the subject he has raised is a very important one, namely, the development of market [Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle).]

research for products abroad as well as in Canada. This subject should really have been discussed under the item relating to the economics division, but perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words about it under this item. This is one item that I feel has been overlooked.

In the speeches mentioned by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, I outlined several proposals that I thought we should follow. The emphasis today is on market research and getting new products in front of the consumer to keep pace with our competitors. Within the last four or five months we have had an interesting experience along these lines. A certain number of potatoes from the United States were coming into Canada. Upon investigation it was ascertained this was because the patent that was held for processing these potatoes into instant potatoes was a United States patent. The department immediately got busy and bought a patent from the United States department of agriculture and then went ahead on its own with the development of a patent under Dr. Asselbergs. This is an example of market research where the laboratories we had were used to develop a process that would enable Canadians to put up a product more suitable for the Canadian market.

I agree with the hon. member that this is one thing we should push. So far the Department of Agriculture has not done too much about it. We are just reorienting ourselves toward this approach. I think I can guarantee the hon. member that I will give it all the push I can.

In so far as markets in the United Kingdom are concerned, I think the hon. member is aware that our prices in Canada for dairy products and almost all other farm products are very much higher than world prices. We have lost our hold on the United Kingdom market. However, this must not stop us from trying to get back into that market. We do have good products such as wheat and tobacco that we can sell on a competitive basis anywhere in the world. We will have to develop specially products, such as high quality fruit, cheese and so on. As I have said a good many times good, plain Canadian products have a taste advantage that makes them attractive even at higher prices.

I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for permitting me to discuss this subject for a moment. I think the Department of Agriculture is well advised to reorient itself and think more of marketing than it has in the past.

(Translation):

Mr. Boulanger: Mr. Chairman, according to the remarks of the minister, he will exert