

*Supply—Agriculture*

government is prepared to undertake to change the act so the producer might be assured of a better price.

I would very much like the minister to explain the present situation. He says "We are prepared"—and I suppose he is speaking of his departmental officials—"to take eggs at the plant at certain prices".

I should like to ask the minister just how that takes place. Eggs come from various sources. They may be shipped directly or shipped through co-operatives. At the present time how is the producer guaranteed that he will get the price which would normally be guaranteed, namely 38 cents a dozen less handling charges or freight to that point?

I am trying to indicate a situation which often exists. Producers bring in eggs, and they are shipped from local merchants to the packing plants and there is no further payment. The producers take the price paid for the eggs on the basis of the grading at that point, and there is no subsequent payment. I understand it would be tremendously difficult for the officials to be able to say, after these eggs go into storage, whether or not the producer has received a fair price or a price in line with the support price.

I should like the minister to explain to the committee if he can how he has been able to try to maintain over past years that this act has operated for the benefit of the producer. It seems to me that it has provided a guarantee for the processor, but it certainly has failed miserably to protect the producer.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I think I can best answer that by giving the prices. These are egg prices on March 12, 1957, to the producer: At Victoria, 38 cents for grade A large; at Vancouver, 38 cents; at Kelowna, 38 cents; at Regina, 30 cents; at Saskatoon, 30 cents; at Moose Jaw, 30 cents; at Melville, 30 cents; at Prince Albert, 30 cents; at Winnipeg, 30 cents; at Brandon, 29 cents; at Fort William, 39 cents—

**Mr. Argue:** Have you Calgary or Edmonton?

**Mr. Gardiner:** They would be about the same. That is the prairie price of eggs. The price at Fort William was 39 cents, at Toronto on that particular day 32 to 34 cents. I had not noticed it before, but at Exeter where I used to live the price was 31 cents. At Stratford it was 31 cents, at Ottawa 34 to 35 cents, at Montreal 34 to 36 cents, at Quebec 34 to 35 cents, at Chicoutimi 38 to 40 cents, at Three Rivers 34 cents, at Saint John 39 cents, at Moncton 36 cents, at Fredericton 37 cents and at Halifax 36 cents.

I think it will be noted from these prices that the low prices are on the prairies, and

[Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain).]

there are reasons for that. As was stated the other day, there are more reasons than one, but I think it does indicate that more help is required there from somebody than is being provided.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** May I ask the minister a question. Can he explain why the hon. member for Victoria, Ontario, said on February 6, as found at page 1020 of *Hansard*:

Some of my constituents are delivering eggs to the graders at a price of 26 cents.

He indicated that the price to the producer in Ontario was down to about 26 cents at Ontario points. Can the minister explain that?

**Mr. Gardiner:** Of course there are eggs and eggs, and I am not going to try to explain everything about them. If you take the next column, A medium, those are the prices, and if you take A small the prices are lower still. If you go down into the B's the prices are 26 cents at Victoria and 19 cents at Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Regina. If you go into Ontario the prices are 26 cents, 25 cents, 28 cents, 29 cents. If you go farther east the prices are 30 cents, 29 to 34, 25 to 29, 29 to 30 and so on, and at Halifax 25 to 27 for B eggs. I am just trying to tell my hon. friend that what I said the other day is based on the facts. The worst conditions are in the area of which his constituency is the centre.

**Mr. Argue:** You said Brandon a minute ago.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** I should like to ask the minister one other question before he sits down. Would the minister—

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. I do not want to be officious, but I gave the floor to the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra. With his consent, of course, the hon. member for Moose Mountain can continue.

**Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain):** I was going to ask the minister whether or not he considers the low prices he has mentioned for Brandon and other points to be fair and in line with the support prices.

**Mr. Gardiner:** The prices are pretty much in line with what the conditions under which delivery has to be made make necessary. The government that has been in power in Saskatchewan for 13 years has never built a storage for eggs and they were going to build everything. Those eggs have to be shipped to Winnipeg for storage, or shipped to Calgary in the other direction. If