

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That is so, and we do that also in the maritime provinces and in British Columbia.

Mr. DONNELLY: Has the Department of Trade and Commerce any authority to collect from the farmers of western Canada over \$2,500,000 more than they really need? As I read the statutes, the Department of Trade and Commerce is supposed to collect only enough to pay for the cost of weighing and inspecting the wheat, but I believe that during the last few years they have collected more than they require. What is their authority for doing so?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: The fee is \$1 per car for grading and inspection, and \$1 for weighing, making a total of \$2 per car. The volume of wheat has increased enormously and the revenues have been suddenly inflated; the larger volume of grain has been more economically handled, and therefore the fee of \$2 which was about right formerly is now found to produce a surplus.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Will the minister tell us—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I was following the question just answered by the minister.

Mr. BANCROFT: I would like to bring to the attention of the minister the need of some regulation and control over the sale of binder twine in this country, and I bring it up under this item—seed, feed and fertilizer control—because the inspection of binder twine is administered by the seed branch of the Department of Agriculture.

I wish to take a few moments, Mr. Chairman, to discuss this matter of binder twine, which is sold in Canada in bales which weigh 50 pounds gross or 48 pounds net. The farmer pays for fifty pounds of twine or the gross weight of the bale. The twine is labelled 500 feet, 550 feet, 600 feet or 650 feet per pound. The 600-foot per pound twine is the twine which is most commonly used in western Canada. A farmer can easily detect short weight in his twine because he can check that quite easily, but he cannot detect short length. To check the twine for length it would be necessary to unwind the whole bale. A bale weighing 48 pounds of 600-foot twine should measure 28,800 feet, or about 5½ miles of twine. Once the twine is unwound it cannot be used for harvesting purposes, therefore the farmer should be safeguarded against short-length twine by the provisions of the act under which the sale of binder twine is regulated. The present Inspection and Sale Act of 1906—

[Mr. Donnelly.]

there has been nothing done since 1906, Mr. Chairman, and since then there has been a great increase in the consumption—does not provide the proper safeguards in this matter I would like to read a few sections of this act which regulates the sale and inspection. Section 347 reads as follows:

Upon or attached to every ball of binder twine sold or offered for sale in Canada there shall be a label with the name of the dealer and the number of feet of twine per pound in the ball marked or stamped thereon.

Section 352 reads as follows:

Every dealer who sells, offers for sale or has in his possession for sale in Canada any ball of binder twine not properly and correctly labelled with the number of feet per pound in the ball, as required by this part, shall be liable to a penalty of not less than one dollar and not more than five dollars for each ball of such binder twine—

This is the important part of this section:—provided, that no deficiency in the number of feet of twine contained in any ball shall be deemed to be a contravention of this section unless the deficiency exceeds five per centum of the length indicated by the label.

Section 347 provides for the tag to be attached to each ball, which tag shall state the number of feet in each pound of twine. Section 352 provides that no twine shall be deemed to be short unless the shortage exceeds five per cent of the length indicated on the label. These are the only provisions in the act to safeguard against short-length twine. There is no provision in the act regarding the tensile strength of twine and no provision for the checking of salvaged or reconditioned twine. It is true that the inspectors in the seed branch of the Department of Agriculture have done splendid work in checking the binder twine offered for sale in Canada, yet their effectiveness is limited by the inadequate act under which they operate. The act states that binder twine can be five per cent short of the length indicated on the tag and still be legal, and that provision makes possible a systematic shortage. Take a bale of binder twine labelled 600 feet per pound, containing forty-eight pounds net of twine; it should measure 28,800 feet per bale, but the five per cent leeway allowed under section 347 amounts to 1,440 feet, so the manufacturer could sell a bale labelled 28,800 feet, which might contain only 27,360 feet, and which would still be legal under the present act. A farmer purchasing five hundred pounds of 600-foot twine which measured just up to the minimum required by the act would be paying for 288,000 feet and would be receiving only 273,600 feet; he would be 14,400 feet or nearly three miles short.

I went to a few hon. members of this house to inquire as to their purchases of binder twine.