

on second reading. This bill is not intended to cover any products except those we buy ourselves. In other words, we cannot set prices. We have no authority to do so, in the sense referred to; the provinces have that authority. We simply say that we will buy a particular product at a particular price. I take it for granted that no one will sell to anyone else at less than that price; they will sell to us. Once we have bought the product, of course we have control over what is done with it. I should assume that if a cooperative organization were handling the product we would say to that organization, "We guarantee a certain price". Then the cooperative organization would do as the wheat board does now; it would make that the initial payment. If, later on, it should turn out that we did not get that much for the product, we would have to provide the difference. The company paid it out, and we would pay the company the difference. That is the answer to the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton.

Mr. HATFIELD: Is the board going to do this, or is it going to use the machinery already set up?

Mr. GARDINER: I would say that the board can do it in either way. The board has authority to recommend to the government to do it either in one way or the other. In many cases they would handle it through the machinery set up.

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I have something to say with respect to paragraph (i)—

To appoint commodity boards or other agents to undertake the purchase and the disposition of agricultural products.

When speaking this afternoon I said I believed that so far as possible these commodity boards should be cooperative organizations handling farm products. I said, further, that there are in Canada a considerable number of cooperatives which have practically complete control over the products they are selling. I mentioned particularly the fruit boards and vegetable boards in British Columbia. There has been a great growth in cooperative operations, and a great deal of thought given to this matter by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. They have considered carefully the idea of commodity boards controlling various farm products. I believe that where a vote is taken in connection with the control of a certain product, and where there may be a fifty per cent or sixty per cent vote in favour of complete control, such a product should come under their control, entirely, so far as collections

[Mr. Gardiner.]

and the selling of their products are concerned.

I suggest that this section can be made into one which will assist the endeavours of agriculture to get control over the sale of their products. Toward that end I am moving an amendment to this paragraph. I move:

That section 9 (1) (i) of Bill No. 169 be amended by striking out all the words after the words "commodity boards" and substituting therefor the following words: "Which shall include representatives of the primary producers to undertake the purchase and disposition of agricultural products."

I believe this amendment will strengthen the bill, and will tend to assist agriculture in its laudable efforts to control its own products, and to see that through its own efforts it is able to obtain a fairer share in the economic structure of Canada.

Mr. GARDINER: Paragraph (i) makes it possible to have the business carried on through organizations of that kind, where they exist, and where it is advisable to have them. It does not compel them—that is all. The suggestion has been made, for example, that apples are handled in a certain way. Well, the government has had more continuous dealings with apples than with any other product since the beginning of the war. In the very first year of the war we made agreements with the apple board to handle apples in Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia, and perhaps one of the most satisfactory arrangements we have had has been with that particular board.

I should think there would be no possibility of any board set up operating in any other way in relation to the product under the control of that board. This simply says that we can appoint commodity boards, which means that they may be boards already in existence, boards in cooperatives, or in any other organizations—"or other agents". That is, we may say, if we are going to handle a particular product produced right across Canada, that this is a fair price. Anyone who takes delivery of that product at that particular price will conduct a transaction which will be recognized by the board. Money will be advanced in connection with it.

It may be that when we have taken products over in that way we may have to dispose of them at prices less than the prices paid for them. But they are guaranteed by us, which means that they can pay the initial price. But to make it compulsory, so that we could only operate through cooperatives, would make it so that it would be impossible to operate at all in some sections of Canada in respect of certain products, unless, of course, we saw to it in the first place that an organization of that