

*Agricultural Products Board*

\$15 million. In other words, we will never have more than \$15 million of working capital. It is a circulating fund which may amount to much more than that for the time being in view of the fact that we may have products moving from one side to another.

**Mr. Wright:** If losses are sustained will they be taken out of the \$200 million under the Agricultural Prices Support Act?

**Mr. Gardiner:** The Agricultural Prices Support Act does not affect this at all except that this board may be asked to buy products for the agricultural prices support board. When that is done the money for that purpose will be provided by the agricultural prices support board.

**Mr. Wright:** What is the necessity for two boards? Cannot the agricultural prices support board do what you are asking this board to do? It seems to me there is duplication in setting up the two boards.

**Mr. Gardiner:** The agricultural prices support board has a big enough job providing me with the statistics which I have been quoting to satisfy my hon. friends on the opposition side without entering into the purchasing and selling of livestock. They would ask this board or some other agency to do that particular work for them.

**Mr. Wright:** Were they not doing that purchasing up until now?

**Mr. Gardiner:** No.

**Mr. Wright:** Who purchased the apples and potatoes?

**Mr. Gardiner:** The meat board purchased the livestock that was purchased from time to time to supply the British contracts or for other purposes. The dairy board purchased cheese or other dairy products that were required. The special products board purchased potatoes, apples, beans or other products of that kind. There were three boards. This bill is amalgamating the three into one, and taking persons who are familiar with all these activities to create a board of seven instead of the smaller boards which we had before. This board will purchase whatever it is ordered to purchase by the government or by me on behalf of the government.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I think it would be timely to recall Mr. Bennett's policy to increase the price of butter. As a foreword may I say that one of his supporters, the Conservative member for Regina, thanked Mr. Bennett when he was prime minister for having subscribed \$700,000 to the party fund. The story behind that is that both Mr. Bennett and

[Mr. Gardiner.]

his chief organizer invested \$350,000 each in the stock market and speculated on the fall of prices. Each time Mr. Bennett said that things were going badly in Canada he was making more money for the party fund. When both had got back the money they had invested in the stock market Mr. Bennett delivered a sermon advising the young people not to speculate on the fall of prices. He withdrew his money and gave it to the party and used part of it to import butter from New Zealand to be dumped on the Canadian market in order to lower the price of Canadian butter.

I heard butter, butter, butter during the election, and I was fed up with it. After the election, which I survived, my great pleasure was to ask questions of the then minister of agriculture, Hon. Mr. Weir, who represented the constituency of Melfort which my hon. friend represents now with such distinction.

There was a by-election in the Three Rivers riding in the summer of 1931, a year after the election. I was supporting the Liberal candidate, a gentleman who is no longer a member of this house. We held a joint discussion with two lawyers from Montreal, a father and son, both very fine fellows.

I told them that they must speak about butter. We were speaking in a parish which supported an industrious dairying industry. Most of the voters were farmers who were interested in learning about the benefits they were receiving under Mr. Bennett's policy. Mark you, this is history. I said, "We will talk of agriculture; we will talk about butter. Here is one question in *Hansard* about butter. Can you answer it? Here is another one about butter imports; here is one about butter production; here is one about butter consumption; here is one about butter exports. What have you to say?" They said, "Bennett is a great man", and they won.

What were those questions? There were many but I have had a few copied. The first dealt with butter imports and will be found reported on page 2366 of *Hansard* of June 8, 1931. I quote:

Mr. Pouliot:

1. What firms and persons imported butter from (a) New Zealand, and (b) Australia in May, June and July, 1930?

2. What quantity was imported by each firm or person?

Mr. Bennett: It is not customary to give the names of firms who import goods into this country. This has never been done; it has always been held as something that should not be done inasmuch as it is private business. In making this answer, I am but following the practice which has heretofore obtained in all departments.

Mr. Pouliot: I am always satisfied with the answers of the right hon. gentleman, provided he says something.

Question dropped.