

*Agricultural Products Board*

dealing with a progressive and intelligent type of farmers, and some I have the honour to represent.

**Mr. Laing:** Charlie Hayden was the father.

**Mr. Herridge:** The hon. member for Vancouver South has mentioned that C. A. Hayden was the father of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. At present he is secretary of the British Columbia fruit growers association, and the editor of *Country Life*. It was through his efforts in the early days that we had the beginning of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

I wish to mention one or two further points before concluding. When we talk about price support we know it will cost the country something. But we have to balance that cost against the place of the farmer in society. I was very much interested in reading in the November issue of the *Manitoba Co-Operator* a few figures concerning the cost of price support, per capita, in Canada. It states:

Canada's program of price support for farm products, initiated in 1946, has cost the Canadian people approximately three-quarters of a dollar per capita for the whole of the five-year period covered by the report just issued by the prices support board at Ottawa.

I am not going to deal with the figures in detail, but I would draw attention to the 75 cents per capita for price support. What would \$5 per capita mean, if it were going to assure the stability of agriculture in this country, and if it were going to assure the necessary production of food both at home and for use of those abroad who are working for peace? I suggest seriously the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) would be quite justified in receiving funds from the Department of National Defence. In the light of the terms of the Atlantic treaty, and the activities of ministers and delegates at various organization meetings to consider united action for the defence of democracy, I say the Department of National Defence could very well say to the Department of Agriculture, "Here is \$10 million to assure positive and effective price support." That would be a good investment toward the maintenance of freedom.

Before concluding I should like to quote briefly from *Country Life* an article which I believe would be of interest to hon. members. This is the April, 1951, issue, in which Dr. Raymond W. Miller, who has been a frequent visitor to British Columbia, and has paid direct attention to agricultural affairs, and who now acts in an advisory

[Mr. Herridge.]

capacity to the United Nations Organization, had this to say:

The real answer to the world's problems lies in assisting the rural peoples of the earth to attain a better standard of living.

I believe that expresses well and briefly the facts as we see them today. The real answer to the world's problems is to raise the standard of living of the rural people. Before I take my seat let me say that I think the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) made an excellent suggestion this morning when he said the government would be well advised to make an investigation into the spread between producer and consumer prices of agricultural products.

We know the producer gets only what is left, and that the consumer is paying a high price. I believe there is a great opportunity for the government in this instance to render a service to agriculture and to the consumers. It would assist the public generally in understanding the complexity of this marketing problem.

The farmers of Canada have built sound co-operative organizations. They can grow the crops. They can process the crops, and they can market them within the limits of their powers, and within the limits of fluctuating prices on a fluctuating market. There is no question about it, the farmers are doing their part. They are doing all that is required of them. I hope after the bill has been adopted the government will use the measure and link it up with the Agricultural Prices Support Act so as to give some measure of security to the farmers.

**Mr. H. O. White (Middlesex East):** Mr. Speaker, the position in which agriculture finds itself today makes the adoption of this bill more or less a necessity. This comes about because of the peculiar position in which the policies of this government have placed agriculture.

I need refer only to one product, butter, to justify Bill No. 18. During the last year, when some 4,500,000 pounds of butter were imported, I believe Canada Packers and others took advantage of the situation to secure butter at a low price and to sell it at a fairly high price. So I say that while this bill is necessary, it is still vicious legislation.

The hon. member who preceded me in the debate has referred to the cost of 75 cents per capita in connection with the support of prices. That, in itself, is an indication that the support legislation has never been used seriously or conscientiously for the purpose for which practically all agriculture believed it was first intended.