

*Agricultural Products Act*

**Mr. Harkness:** You have wandered a long way from the number of cows being milked.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I was coming back to that in order to say to my hon. friend that if he were not a farmer living in the city rather than out on the farm he would be milking cows too.

**Mr. Harkness:** I do live on the farm.

**Mr. Gardiner:** We have heard a great deal—

**Mr. Harkness:** Are you going to answer the question?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would remind hon. members that we are on second reading of the bill, and a member is allowed to speak only once. If hon. gentlemen want to question the minister I suggest that they wait until we are in the committee stage.

**Mr. Harkness:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, while I was speaking this afternoon the minister made three speeches, at least, and numerous interjections.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I am not objecting to the question at all. I will answer it in the shortest possible way by saying that the cows we had in Canada in 1938 produced 15,819 million pounds of milk, while the cows we had in 1948 produced 16,529 million pounds of milk. Either we had more cows in 1948 or they were better cows, one or the other. As a matter of fact, what these statistics show from beginning to end is that there is greater production of farm products in Canada now than at any time prior to the war, and there is no use of anyone trying to argue to the contrary. Everyone knows that is so. In addition, the farmers are getting more for their products than they ever got before; and because that is so the gross cash return to farmers in Canada for 1948 was about two and a half times what it was in any year prior to the war. I know some of my friends will say that costs are up too. Of course they are; but costs are not up in the same proportion that earnings are, as any farmer will tell you. Net returns from farm products for 1948 were \$1,700 million as against some \$800 million three years ago. So they are just about double what they were only three years ago; and that being the case I do not see how anyone can argue that the position is not better from all points of view.

**Mr. Harkness:** Would the minister permit a question?

**Mr. Gardiner:** Yes.

**Mr. Harkness:** In view of all this I am just wondering whether the minister has decided that agriculture was at its most prosperous

[Mr. Gardiner.]

level last year, and if that is so whether he will say there is still an emergency. Has he made up his mind?

**Mr. Gardiner:** I will answer that question by saying the Liberal party, contrary to what has been the practice of some other parties, has never allowed an emergency to develop to the point where everyone is in relief camps before taking care of the situation. We know an emergency when we see it coming and deal with it before it reaches difficult proportions.

**Mr. Harkness:** Now I wonder if you will answer the question.

**Mr. Gardiner:** I have in my hand a speech which was delivered to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in London by myself. I am going to follow a practice which earlier in the session I said some members of the opposition could not follow; that is, that they could not quote themselves. I can quote myself in this speech.

**Mr. Harkness:** It does not prove anything.

**Mr. Gardiner:** In this way I can correct some of the suggestions made by those who were attempting to quote me. In this speech I reviewed the experiences we had during the war. I pointed out that we had a certain objective in mind, which was to prove to the British people that we could feed them to a greater extent than prior to the war they had thought we were able to do. I suggested that we had proven this. Then I went on to say:

When victory was assured there was a change in the policy. The bulk sale agreements were made to read—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am sorry to interrupt the minister, but he has exhausted his time.

**Some hon. Members:** Go on.

**Mr. Gardiner:** There are just two paragraphs I should like to read; then I will sit down.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I want to raise a point of order, which has nothing to do with the question just dealt with. The minister was quoting from a document, and reaching certain conclusions based on the figures contained in that document. I understand that such reference to a document makes it necessary that the document be tabled so that other hon. members may be in a position to ascertain whether or not the conclusions stated were in fact based on the evidence contained therein. I would suggest that the minister table that document.

**Mr. Gardiner:** Is that Mr. Cripps' speech?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Gardiner:** When I am through with it I will hand it in.