

58 cent pegged price, and I do not blame the farmers and the dealers. Had the minister kept his hands off it and attended to his business in the Confederation building; had he allowed the business people of the country to run their own business, whether in potatoes or anything else; had he looked after the ordinary affairs of his department, this country would have got clear of hundreds of thousands of bushels of potatoes which, owing to the ridiculous stupidity of the act, the farmers of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been unable to dispose of—potatoes that are now sprouting and cannot even be fed to the pigs because in a few weeks they will be rotten.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): In the first place I did not take credit for having solved the problem in the maritimes. I only wish that some solution were possible for the difficulties in which the potato producers have found themselves. Nor did I peg the price, nor did I pay any official to go around checking up whether potatoes were sold or not, nor did—

An hon. MEMBER: Who did, then?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): One at a time, please; nor did the former chairman of the dominion marketing board, Doctor Barton, resign for any of the reasons which the hon. member has stated.

Mr. DUFF: Why did he resign?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I think that covers practically all the statements the hon. member has made, all of which are incorrect.

Mr. DUFF: I rise to a point of order. The minister says that my statements were incorrect. I said that Doctor Barton had resigned. That is a fact, is it not? That statement is not incorrect.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Not the reason the hon. member gave for his resignation.

Mr. DUFF: I said that the chairman of the marketing board resigned because he did not agree with the policies of the minister, and that is correct.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): No, it is not.

Mr. DUFF: Will the minister tell us why he did resign?

Mr. FRASER (Northumberland): He got a better job.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Neither of the hon. members knows very much about the matter. Doctor Barton, the former chairman of the

dominion marketing board, was and still is Deputy Minister of Agriculture. Because of the work that he had done in plotting out this legislation, we asked him, in addition to his duties as deputy minister, for a period to be chairman of the marketing board. That was strictly understood at the time he accepted the position, because it was felt that it was too heavy a load to be chairman of the marketing board and Deputy Minister of Agriculture for any considerable length of time. What the hon. member is criticizing is this: It is not the interference of me or of anyone else with the operation of the potato growers of Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island. The board that did everything that was supposed to have been done, although the hon. member feels it was not done altogether as they had hoped, was a board named by the potato growers themselves and the shippers independently of any suggestion or guidance on the part of the dominion marketing board, the idea being that they themselves on the ground were in the best position—and this is the basis of the marketing act—to decide the most efficient way of marketing their potatoes, especially under the abnormal conditions such as existed. Therefore all the criticism that has been levelled at me has really been levelled at the fellow citizens of the hon. member for Antigonish-Guysborough as well as other maritimers who were responsible for formulating this scheme, naming their board and endeavouring to carry out, in what they thought was the best possible way, the regulating of the marketing of their products.

I do not think there is any other question I have omitted. I made a note of the points raised by the hon. member as he proceeded with his remarks. The whole basis is this: it gives to the producers themselves power to handle their own products in the way of regulating the marketing of them, and the men who put the scheme into force were men appointed by the producers themselves, their own local marketing board.

Mr. DUFF: I admit with the minister that the people of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick had great hopes that when this marketing board legislation was put through, there would be a new heaven and a new earth. They were desperate on account of the policies of this government, due to the fact that the Minister of Agriculture in 1930 promised the farmers of Canada seventy cents a pound for butter.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I must object very strenuously to that statement. The hon.