

the situation is that they complied with the government regulations in every detail; they bring their hogs to the stockyards to be sold, and quite frequently—this was revealed to me only about a week ago—they are forced to take their hogs home again and hold them for another two or three weeks. Immediately they are required to do that they undergo a loss. If they continue to feed the hogs, there is a danger of overweight when they are brought in again; if they feed them just enough to maintain the required weight, they are out the cost of the day to day feed; if the hogs lose weight, again the farmers lose. It seems to me that the problem should be tackled in a different manner. If an aircraft manufacturer makes a plane which the government is not prepared to take from him at once, he is allowed the cost of storage, insurance, and like charges. The farmer should be treated in the same way; when he brings his hogs into the stockyard the government should be prepared to buy those hogs then and there.

Mr. BLAIR: What would they do with them?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): They asked for them. What do they do with surplus aircraft? They store them or pay for the storage, because they are the government's property when they are brought out of the factory.

Mr. DUPUIS: The conditions are not the same.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): The planes belong to the government and not to the aircraft manufacturer. It should be the same with the farmer; when he brings his hogs into the stockyard the government should take possession of them. If they want to have a feeding lot there or something of the sort, that might be the solution; but delivery should be taken of the farmer's hogs as he brings them in. Then the nation itself would assume responsibility for any loss incurred after the time the farmers had delivered the stock.

Mr. DUPUIS: Does the hon. member mean to say that the western farmer does not make a profit on hogs—that he is not making a profit on hogs this year?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): You never heard me say that.

Mr. DUPUIS: What is your complaint, then?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): If you want to say that, go ahead.

[Mr. C. E. Johnston.]

Mr. DUPUIS: What is the situation of the eastern farmer?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Do your own talking, please. If the hon. member wants to say that the farmers are making too much profit in the west, that is his privilege—

Mr. DUPUIS: I do not say that, but I say they make a profit.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): —but I am trying to assist the Minister of Agriculture because I know he is having difficulty in solving the problem.

An hon. MEMBER: What would be your suggestion?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I am sure the people in the west are not satisfied with the way in which the thing is being handled now, and merely to recite what the packing companies are doing to-day as compared with a year ago is not the solution. Everyone knows, or can know if he will read the figures which the minister has given—and no one doubts the correctness of those figures—that the packing plants are doing much more than they did before. Only look at their profit sheets and you will find that out. But that does not solve the difficulty. I have an important suggestion to make to the minister. I do not know whether he will accept it or whether he has something better to propose, but I think some plan should be worked out whereby, when the farmer brings his product to the market, the government would at once take possession of it, whether it be hogs or beef or any other commodity, which is an essential war material. The government, from the point of view of war necessity, has appealed to the patriotism of the farmers to produce, and when the farmers comply with that request they have done their share. But to penalize the farmer and force him to take his hogs home, and definitely to incur a loss on them, is not good business from anyone's point of view. I should like to see the minister, therefore, make some plan for taking over possession of these hogs and paying the farmer the price that is coming to him.

Item agreed to.

Assistance in disposal of agricultural products rendered surplus by the war, \$550,000.

Mr. QUELCH: There is no doubt that prices paid at present for agricultural produce do tend to increase production, but it is a great mistake for anyone to think the prices which the farmers are receiving are unduly high because they seem to be so good compared with prices received in the past. Let us