

Farm Prices

in the minds of hon. members as they discuss the matter. It will be noted that at page 5314 of *Hansard* for July 25 I moved the resolution upon which this bill is based. The second paragraph of that resolution contains this statement:

To provide further that the governor in council may authorize from time to time payments out of unappropriated moneys in the consolidated revenue fund, up to an aggregate of two hundred million dollars . . .

I notice that in the printed bill that amount is given as two million dollars. I wanted to indicate that mistake in the very beginning of the discussion. When the bill is in committee it will be amended to read two hundred million dollars.

In moving second reading of this bill I would first of all call attention to its title: an act for the support of the prices of agricultural products during the transition from war to peace. At the same time I should like to call attention to some misunderstandings which I think are in the minds of people generally, unless they have been somewhat recently checking the figures with regard to the transition period following the last war. For example, in going over the records of prices during the last war I find that generally speaking the prices of farm products did not reach the level of the prices of 1941 until the third year of the war. Therefore the years which are comparable as far as prices go during the last war would be 1915-16 with regard to grains and 1916 with regard to other products for which the records are kept on a calendar year basis. Those would be comparable with 1941-42 during this war, so far as grains are concerned, and with 1941 for other products the records of which are kept on the basis of the calendar year. Taking those price levels during the last war and during this war, I should like to make some comments; and with the permission of the house I should like these tables placed upon *Hansard* in the form in which I have them before me, in order that they may be brought to the attention of hon. members and of the country.

It will be seen that the price of oats, for example, which of course enter into the feeding of live stock, in 1915-16 was 45.6 cents per bushel, basis Fort William, while in 1941-42 the average during the year was 49.1 cents. The price of barley in 1915-16 was 64 cents and in 1941-42 it was 59.8 cents, or almost 60 cents. Then when we come to butcher steers, basis Toronto, the price for good butcher steers in 1916 was 8.4 cents; in 1941 it was 8.7 cents. Bacon hogs sold at Toronto in 1916 for \$10.54 and in 1941 for \$10.20.

[Mr. Gardiner.]

The price of cheese at Montreal in 1916 was 19.8 cents; in 1941 it was 18.2 cents.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is without any bonus?

Mr. GARDINER: That is figured with the premiums which then existed.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): In both cases?

Mr. GARDINER: There were no premiums in the first case; there were premiums in the second. Butter sold in Montreal for 35.1 cents in 1916 and 33.7 cents in 1941. Eggs sold at Montreal for 39.5 cents in 1916 and 34.6 cents in 1941. I would call attention to the fact that in the following year during both the last war and this war, there was a considerable increase in prices generally. For example, in 1916-17 oats went up to 61.9 cents. In 1942-43 they were pegged, of course, at a ceiling of 51½ cents and the average price was 49.2 cents or approximately the same as in 1941. It will be recalled, however, that the following year we added 10 cents a bushel to the ceiling price, which brought the average up to 61.5 cents, so it was not until 1943 that the price of oats was raised to a figure comparable with the price in 1916-17. At the same time I would recall that without any controls during the last war, in the year which is comparable with 1943-44 oats went up to 81.8 cents and the following year dropped back to 78.9 cents. That was the year in which the war ended.

The story with regard to barley is a little different from the story with regard to most of the other products, and I am not sure that I can say why that should be so. The price of barley went up much earlier in the last war than did the prices of most products. Barley in 1915-16 was 64 cents. The next year it was \$1.06 and the next year it was \$1.37. Then, in the year the war ended, namely 1918-19—and it ended early in that crop year—barley dropped back to \$1.07.

There is one point to which I would draw attention in connection with the price of barley in that particular year. There was a variation in the price running from an average of \$1.21, low, in one month to \$1.81 high in another month. In other words there was a great variation throughout the year in the price of barley during that period of time.

In this war, while barley started at very nearly the same price—approximately 60 cents a bushel as against 64—it was only 59.8 in the year 1941-42. It was pegged at 64½ under our ceiling price structure, and it was the same in the next year, 1942-43. It was up to 79.8 after the premium of 15 cents was added in 1943. It is 79.8 at the present time. Perhaps I should use the term "returns" rather than