

the policy has been adopted of paying freight on fertilizer it applies to all crops on which fertilizer is used. It applies to potatoes as well as grain. There is no discrimination now as between the two.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): When did that come into effect?

Mr. GARDINER: My recollection is that the date of the order is January 3, 1944. I understand it applies from January 1 of this year.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): It did not apply last year?

Mr. GARDINER: No.

Mr. SENN: Just one more question. Did I understand the minister to say that this freight assistance applies in cases where the fertilizer is hauled by truck rather than by rail? In a great many places in Ontario and the central provinces fertilizer is shipped by truck rather than by rail. Does the assistance apply in both cases?

Mr. GARDINER: It does apply to trucking, but it is based on the rail cost, that is, if the trucker is travelling over a certain route which can be reached by rail it does not apply until he gets out to the dollar point, and from there on it applies in the same way as it would on the railway.

Item agreed to.

Seeds administrator—administration, \$19,100.

Mr. SENN: Before this item carries I should like to discuss the matter of seeds. I am not sure whether it might not better come under another item farther down under the special products board, seed export office. I have something I want to say in regard to—

Mr. GARDINER: It would come under the special products board.

Item agreed to.

Meat board—administration, \$71,300.

Mr. BLACKMORE: I should like to discuss the question of beef. I said yesterday that I believed the government had bungled the whole question of beef production in southern Alberta. Whether or not I was wrong in my judgment I think will depend upon the answers that may be given to a number of questions. I find a great deal of confusion in the minds of the people regarding beef matters; therefore I should like to ask the minister a number of questions and give him time in which to look up the answers, so that he may place them upon *Hansard*. Then we will be able to study

[Mr. Gardiner.]

them and enlighten ourselves, and determine whether or not we have been wrong in our judgment.

The first question I wish to ask is this. Is it a fact that in August, 1942, the beef producers of Alberta waived the right to export beef to the United States? Did the beef producers surrender this right to the wartime food corporation, which means, was it understood that the wartime food corporation was to export beef to the United States? In return for the waiving of the right to export beef to the United States, did the Canadian government agree to review production costs from time to time, and wherever justified to adjust the selling prices of beef? How many times since August, 1942, has the cost of production of beef been officially reviewed by the government? By what agency was the review conducted, and on what dates? Was a report made on each occasion? If so, to whom was it made? Did the agency or board or committee to which each report was made have authority to adjust the selling prices of beef? Before giving the other questions I may add that there is an impression abroad among the people in my constituency that the government has organized a set-up in which it is able to give the run-around to anyone whatever who asks for information regarding the production of beef, so that it is quite impossible to find the truth from anybody.

Now I wish to go on with the questions. If the agency did not have authority, did the agency receiving the reports pass on such reports to the agency that did possess the power or authority to adjust selling prices upward? Was the report accompanied by a recommendation for an upward adjustment? If not, why not; and if so, was an adjustment made? If so, by how much, and how many times? If no upward adjustment was made, why not? Again, in return for waiving the right to export beef to the United States, were beef producers promised by the government—

The CHAIRMAN: Order. If I may be allowed, we are discussing dairy products now, and I wonder if a discussion of beef would be in order at the moment.

Mr. GARDINER: No, we are discussing the meat board.

Mr. BLACKMORE: This is the item covering the meat board, Mr. Chairman; this is the point at which I expected the beef discussion to be carried on. In return for waiving the right to export beef to the United States were the beef producers promised by