

Mr. BROWN: The minister has used a lot of words but he has not answered my question. I want to know if it would be possible for a man who had not been hitherto growing tobacco in that area to go into the area, buy a farm, produce tobacco and sell it. That is a simple question and it does not require a lot of words to answer.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I think we can consider from whom these remarks have come. The hon. member asked the question and I answered it with a straight "yes". I repeat the answer, yes. The hon. member evidently was not satisfied with that; he wanted to learn how these people marketed their tobacco. I endeavoured to the best of my ability to give him that information.

Mr. YOUNG: The minister has said that he gave a straight "yes" as an answer but I think he also said, "not in that area." I should like him to explain that.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): If a man comes into the area in which this scheme is operating he must conform to the scheme as agreed to by the majority of the producers.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): Must a man who owns land in the area and has not hitherto been producing tobacco comply with the scheme?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I would say, yes.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): He could not sell without the permission of the board?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Without the permission of the board, yes.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): If this thing was decided by a vote, how was the vote taken? Was it a secret ballot, was it an open convention or what was it?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Meetings were held and there was a personal sign-up afterwards. The report received by the dominion marketing board was that the scheme had been endorsed by seventy-one per cent of the growers, representing approximately eighty per cent of the land devoted to the production of tobacco, and by the majority of the responsible manufacturers and packers of flue cured tobacco.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): Has the minister taken the trouble to find out how many growers were renting land from the syndicate represented by the chairman of the board and what proportion of the growers were independent owners? I should like to know also how many syndicates there are similar to the one in which the chairman is interested and what proportion of the total acreage is controlled by the syndicate.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The information I have, which I should like to verify, is that only owners voted.

Mr. MOORE (Ontario): My information is that more than fifty per cent of the land in this area is controlled by the several syndicates.

Mr. YOUNG: A moment ago the minister referred to blanket licences having been published in the newspapers to give the growers of tobacco the licence to sell their product that year. This is a new form of licence; can the minister furnish us with a copy of it?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I shall be glad to do that.

Mr. YOUNG: Has the minister a copy with him to-night?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): No.

Mr. DUFF: Apparently the minister has taken credit to himself and to the marketing board for having solved the potato problem. Speaking biblically, may I say that "I have not found so great a faith, not even in Israel," as the minister's.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Would the hon. member have any objection to my correcting that statement?

Mr. DUFF: Wait until I am through; don't get excited.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I supposed the hon. member would want to be correct as he went ahead.

Mr. DUFF: You can correct me if you can after I have finished, not while I am making my remarks.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): You are correcting him.

Mr. DUFF: Yes, at the moment. If I understood him correctly, the minister took the credit for having solved the potato situation in the maritime provinces. Will the minister tell me why the former chairman of the marketing board resigned? Can the minister say to me as a humble citizen of Canada who buys and sells potatoes that the scheme evolved by the marketing board or by the minister or by anybody else as far as the potatoes are concerned was successful in Nova Scotia, or even successful in New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island? It is all camouflage; this thing is all a mistake and the sooner the minister wakes up to that fact the better. Because the government interfered with the ordinary marketing of potatoes last fall, potatoes were sold in Prince Edward Island at 8 cents a bushel.