

# COOPERATIVE COUNCIL REQUIRED BY ONTARIO, COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Organization Must Be Formed to Bring Together Farmer and Consumer, Says Statement of Special Agricultural Inquiry Board — Brand Canadian Goods and Compulsory Cream Grading Also Recommended**

## MINORITY REPORT PROTESTS FINDINGS

Concurrently with the tabling in the Legislature of the Agricultural Inquiry Committee's second report, came the presentation by A. Belanger, Liberal member for Russell, of a minority report, in which he protests against the committee's recommendations for protection upon fruits and vegetables, eggs and baby chicks, foreign "dumping," the committee's "conjectures" upon the effect of the Australian treaty, and other matters in the report.

"The committee's report," says Mr. Belanger, "contains strictures on the Dominion Department of Agriculture supposedly for not having given timely information and advice as to the purpose of the Imperial and Economic Committee on marketing and preparing for market foodstuffs prepared in the overseas parts of the Empire and especially of meat. After minute inquiry I must register complete disagreement with this statement. Nothing reasonable was left undone to secure adequate export representation on the committee."

### No Effect of Treaty Felt.

Regarding the Australian butter and egg treaty comments, Mr. Belanger says: "At the time of writing no appreciable effect of the treaty can be pointed to upon the butter and cheese industry in Canada, although some weeks have passed since the report was adopted by the majority of the committee."

Mr. Belanger notes in each instance that the subject of "protection" is outside Provincial scope. With these reservations Mr. Belanger heartily endorses the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the committee.

"Whether Canada realizes it or not," says the main report, "the fact remains that the agricultural marketing systems, either established or proposed by countries in competition with Canada, make the lesson plain that the next move is up to Canada."

### Ontario Requires Council.

"It is part of this very lesson that Ontario requires a Provincial Co-operative Council, which, among other functions, shall assist co-operative organizations in bringing into existence necessary intermediate agencies between farmer and consumer, in order that perishable products may be better assembled, standardized, stored, and merchandised."

Another recommendation is for "a Canadian brand for Canadian quality products." The report says: "The demand of dairymen for a Canadian brand upon cheese and butter is no new idea. And if cheese and butter, why not bacon and prime beef?"

"Compulsory grading of cream in Ontario will mark a long stride toward volume of uniform quality butter. The dairy industry at this time can do nothing more practical. There is no way by which the dairy situation in Ontario can be better served than by Government grading of cream, which has behind it a representative demand both of dairymen and distributors all over the Province. This demand, we believe, will very soon have unanimous support, based on experience of its benefit."

"There may be some question of the propriety of placing among matters of report the complaints covering butter, eggs, fruit, vegetables, and other commodities for which protection is held to be the producers' economic right at the hands of the Federal Government. The remedy may come from publicity of all the facts at issue."

"The conclusion we have come to that an Ontario cattle pool would fit into the rapidly expanding systems of feeding and selling Canadian cattle, is addressed to the farmers of Ontario themselves. If they decide to go into a cattle pool, they will be generally encouraged by the records

of live stock buying and selling organizations in other places. They should not have more difficulty than Irish co-operatives in the live cattle industry had in establishing the complementary part of the organization in Great Britain."

"More cattle are needed in Ontario. In the Niagara Peninsula many fruit growers are allowing the natural fertility of their land to decline for lack of cattle in their barns."

"The reports issued by the Imperial Economic Committee are of value to Canada and will help farming interests of the Dominion to improve their position on the British market. With the co-operation of the Federal Government and through the agency of a National Export Marketing Commission, the purpose of the committee, which is to increase Empire trade, must develop along practical lines of policy and action in Canada."

### Sheep Protection Act.

Dealing with proposals for amendment to the Dog Tax and Sheep Protection Act, the committee reports the consensus of opinion favoring a heavy fine upon the owners of any dog found off the owner's premises between sunset and sunrise, night being the time when practically all damage is done to sheep by dogs.

Importation of Australia butter in volume into the Canadian market under treaty, stated the committee report, "may involve a reduction in the retail price level of 4 or 5 cents per pound, and displace a considerable proportion of creamery butter now sold, especially in British Columbia."

Responsibility for the dumping of inferior foreign eggs on the Canadian market, the report says, "rests with the Federal Government." The same complaint of dumping applies to the sale in Canada of baby chicks. The document eulogizes the co-operative principle observed in egg circles and in the egg pool, and comments that the consumer will ultimately realize the benefit to himself from stable prices, and better value received the year round.

"The co-operative movement in Ontario lags notably in the home market, into which abuses have intruded that deny the producer benefit to which he is entitled from retail price levels, and have left an impression on the public mind injurious to the reputation of some lines of our agriculture. This is more particularly dealt with later. We are of the opinion that knowledge and recognition of export brands would incidentally give the spasmodic movement in favor of grades in domestic markets a real start, and serve the producers' interests more substantially than is anticipated."

"The Province of Manitoba has set up an Advisory Council on co-operative marketing, the function of which is to correlate the aims and activities of the various associations with a Registrar of Associations responsible to the Minister of Agriculture. The Ontario Agricultural Enquiry Committee has carefully considered plans for a Co-operative Council constituted to represent the co-operative associations now in existence."

We recommend a Co-operative Council for Ontario. Without making definite recommendations at the present time, concerning the constitution and the representative nature of such a council, we are of the opinion that the Wisconsin as well as Manitoba co-operative laws also the functions of the State of Wisconsin Department of Markets, which is in charge of a Markets Commissioner, should first be carefully studied.

The committee says it "is unable to accept the view that official representation on the Imperial Economic Committee was enough. It is not, however, suggested that better personal relations could have been selected."

"We have come to the conclusion that only an independent and impartial body constituted as a National Export Marketing Commission can establish upon a satisfactory basis the standards of agricultural products going out of Canada."