

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

need this legislation. The gentleman farmer, the rancher, or the individual who is well established does not need any protection, but I assert that the young farmer, the one who is taking on the burden of debt in order to establish himself as a primary producer of agricultural products, needs some protection in the marketplace.

In my area of Middlesex and in southern Ontario we have 18 different marketing boards, four of which work under the quota system. I am referring to the Ontario Marketing Board, the Flue-cured Tobacco Marketing Board, and the broiler and turkey boards. This quota system, especially under the Ontario Marketing Board and the Flue-cured Tobacco Marketing Board has been advantageous to participating farmers. I think it has been good for industries such as the dairy industry and the tobacco industry to have these marketing boards. Because of their success, because they have been able to control production, they have enjoyed in the marketplace a fair return for their efforts. Therefore they have expanded, have been able to maintain a good level of economic prosperity in the community and have been successful in the eyes of their neighbours.

Within my riding of Middlesex is the riding of the Minister of Agriculture and Food of the province of Ontario. I should like to quote some of his remarks regarding the urgency of this legislation. I maintain that we need some national farm products marketing legislation. He said on January 25:

How soon can we expect to have national marketing legislation to bring order and stability to the industry? ... Until a national marketing act has been developed and proclaimed, provinces will be forced to use whatever measures they can develop to protect the interests of their producers. It is possible that voluntary agreements can be established, but our experience has indicated little success by this method.

Those are the words of Hon. William Stewart, Minister of Agriculture and Food of the province of Ontario. He also stated before the provincial legislature on April 15, 1971:

The government of Ontario is of the opinion that the ultimate solution to the problems of international or interprovincial agriculture trade and supply management must be found at the national level. We believe that Bill C-176, the national marketing bill now before the House of Commons, provides the legislative machinery whereby this national rationalization of production and marketing can be realized.

I am in agreement with his views on this legislation. I believe that many hon. members opposite are also in agreement with the views of the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food. I urge the House to give speedy approval to this marketing bill. Due to the nature of the farming industry in Canada and its present organization, we know that many individuals are operating under severe financial stress and strain. They more or less rely on the manufacturer, the consumer or the processor to give them whatever price is going at a given time in the market. This is unfair, because those who are least able to bear the burden receive a lower price than they should for their produce. They do not have the requisite facilities to store their produce long enough to take advantage of higher market prices. Under these circumstances, I urge speedy passage of the bill.

[Mr. Lind.]

• (3:30 p.m.)

Hon. Mr. Stewart, again on April 15, 1971, said:

I suggest that had the national marketing legislation now before the House of Commons been in effect, in my opinion, the problems we now face across Canada would not have occurred, as far as interprovincial marketing problems are concerned.

We all realize, Mr. Speaker, that from time to time we become very regionally minded. We all love our home areas, our home provinces. We all fight for the good of our constituencies. But we must remember that a national farm marketing bill is only enabling legislation supporting the ten provinces of Canada in order that they may have their fair share of the market place for their products.

Some people say that national farm marketing legislation will balkanize Canada. I maintain that it will not. As a matter of fact, we have lived for years under a type of balkanization due to the operations of the Canadian Wheat Board. In 1935 the federal government introduced the Canadian Wheat Board Act which really provided the basis for quotas. It placed restrictions on the movement of grain from one province to another. In essence, there is nothing really new about imposing a type of quota restriction on the movement of products among provinces. This has been going on since 1935.

I believe that the Prairie provinces would not like to do away with the Canadian Wheat Board. They may want to revise the Wheat Board legislation. They might like to reform it a little and bring it up to date. Maybe the board is a little old-fashioned, but the prairie provinces have lived with quotas for years. Quotas could be established under a national farm marketing act upon the advice of a national farm marketing council. I firmly believe that the marketing agencies provided for in the bill would be established only after the results of regional plebiscites had shown that producers in the provinces wanted them.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that Bill C-176 is simply enabling legislation to permit the provinces to set up their own marketing boards within their jurisdictions. I fully support it and urge that it be given speedy passage.

Mr. Mac T. McCutcheon (Lambton-Kent): Mr. Speaker, we are discussing motions Nos. 1, 5 and 22 and I have no hesitation whatsoever in supporting these amendments. I think it is safe to say that everyone in this chamber believes we should have free trade in agricultural products, and indeed in all other products, between provinces. I go a little further than that. I believe we should have free enterprise for the individual. I believe in this principle so firmly that I think every Canadian has the right to go broke on his own if he wants to, and a lot of them have been doing that.

Coming from the province of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, I know a little bit about marketing boards because my province has been a forerunner in the field of marketing legislation. We have a hog marketing board, a poultry marketing board and even an asparagus marketing board. You name it and we've got it in the province of Ontario. We have four boards that deal almost exclusively with livestock, and I think there are 11 others that deal with other commodities. What do these boards do? What are they supposed to do? Are they the panacea that the