

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not intend to enter into an argument with the hon. member, but from the point of view of procedure, that is not what is before the House. What is before the House at the moment is a motion, not the bill itself. The hon. member has to make an attempt, as all hon. members are required to do, to relate his remarks to that motion. It is extremely difficult for the Chair to determine at all times whether all members are going beyond the four corners of a debate in the consideration of a motion. While I was in the Chair earlier this afternoon, I gained the impression that some of the speeches went somewhat beyond the limitations of the motion before us. I took it upon myself to remind hon. members to limit themselves to what is before us, namely, these motions. I make the same appeal to the hon. member who has the floor at this time.

• (5:20 p.m.)

Mr. McBride: With all respect to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I think that if you look at the blues you will find I was speaking to the motion before us; I was talking about cattle and calves, which are to be removed from the bill by the amendment.

Mr. Horner: On a point of order, amendment No. 2 is not up for debate, the amendment dealing with the exclusion of cattle and calves. We are now supposed to be dealing with amendments 1, 5 and 22, which do not mention cattle and calves. I wish to draw this to Your Honour's attention and, perhaps, through you, to the attention of the hon. member.

Mr. McBride: I presume the hon. member's purpose is to prevent us from having our say in this debate, and he appears to be doing this quite successfully.

Mr. Horner: You can have that all through January!

Mr. McBride: We are discussing the clause before us—

Mr. Speaker: I hope we may leave that discussion behind us for the time being and try to address ourselves to the substance of the motion.

Mr. McBride: I am almost tempted to rise on a question of privilege and ask whether a man has a right to make a speech without phony points of order and questions of privilege being raised by members opposite with no other purpose than to prevent that speech from being made.

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting I have raised phony points of order. I should like Your Honour to clarify what amendments we are dealing with. In my view we are dealing with amendments Nos. 1, 5 and 22. It is amendment No. 2 which deals with the exception of cattle and calves and it is not now before the House. My point of order was not a phony point of order, and if the hon. member insists on saying it is I suppose I should insist on rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. McBride: The committee of this House which was charged with considering the substance of the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) held 66 meetings and arranged for public hearings in Halifax, Quebec City, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton and Vancouver. So a great deal of time

was spent in trying to assess whether this bill in its totality was in the interests of Canadian agriculture.

It seems to me the time has now come when we should be prepared to vote for or against the measure and get on with it. There are now plenty of protective devices included in it to make sure that no product can be brought in if the producers of that product do not want it brought in. That is the purpose of the amendment before the House at the moment. It is true that the bill as originally drafted did leave too much room for other than producers to have too much say, but this weakness has now been corrected. The point has been met and we now have before us a far better bill. It aims to set up machinery whereby a product controlled by a marketing agency in a province may be regulated across the country by a federal agency. Its object is to establish a marketing council, of whose members at least 50 per cent, or five out of nine, shall be primary producers.

Critics of the bill have suggested that it might be destructive of the agriculture industry; those were the words of the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). But the purpose of the bill, as I see it, is to provide a means whereby the provinces can get together with respect to products about which they are themselves concerned. Whether it be eggs or poultry or turkey or beef or any other of the commodities mentioned, the provinces could get together to work out a plan of marketing which was acceptable to them all.

The provinces already have legislation governing the marketing of certain products, but are unable to apply it on a national basis in the absence of legislation such as we see before us. In effect, as we all ought to know, Bill C-176 is enabling legislation. It does not coerce anyone into doing anything. So I do not understand why we should be so anxious to exclude certain products. If legislation such as this had been in force earlier there is little likelihood that the chicken and egg marketing war would ever have got started.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but apparently his time has expired. As hon. members know, it is difficult to determine at what point the time allotted to him actually ended because there were a number of points of order raised. He could continue, of course, with unanimous consent.

Mr. Hees: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: There appears to be unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to continue.

Mr. McBride: I thank all members of the House for the courtesy extended to me, as it was to the hon. member for Vegreville. I shall conclude as rapidly as possible by pointing out that it is a very serious matter, in my opinion, that a large number of producers of beef should be spooked or frightened into believing somehow that regardless of the safeguards which have been provided, regardless of the amendments which have been brought in, there is nothing but evil intent on the part of the government or on the part of people like myself—that we are here, as the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) said, to destroy the agriculture industry, that we