

quoting the following sentence from Committee Proceedings No. 11, of Thursday, January 21, 1971:

Our chief concern, however, is with the wider implications of the Bill. We recognize that this is enabling legislation and that it must be of a general nature. Yet it seems to us that the Bill is raising almost as many problems as it is attempting to resolve.

Mr. Speaker, that was the opinion of a minister from Eastern Canada. Now coming to central Canada, we have the provincial minister of agriculture who said the following in his brief on January 22, 1971 and I quote:

—and the effects, whether they are favourable or not—

—of the act, following the passing of Bill C-176—

—whether they are favourable or not, according to the point of view of the people affected, or according to what you expect from it, means that in the field of Agriculture, in the province of Quebec and elsewhere it will call for reactions which are as varied as the various vested interests involved and which tend to develop in this very important sector of our economy.

I continue the quotation:

In the face of these various different stands, not only different but often contradictory, the Department of Agriculture of the province of Quebec hesitates to put itself in the position of an arbiter because circumstances do not justify such a role.

Further on, the minister added:

However, Quebec does not feel that this Bill C-176 will *ipso facto*, just by being put into effect, bring an automatic solution. This solution can only be brought about after frank and open discussions between the provinces directly involved and can only be applied, if the provinces are willing to agree to the sacrifice of certain special interests for the general welfare of Canadian agriculture.

For the past months the situation in Canada has been truly disastrous. For example, we see the Ontario government passing legislation to protect producers in that province while seriously harming those of other provinces.

I am under the impression that the situation, far from improving, will, if I am well informed, be getting worse. In fact, I am apprehensive about the future of Canada should such a situation persist and I doubt that Bill C-176 can really represent a completely adequate solution.

● (5:00 p.m.)

I do not mean that Bill C-176 is not an appropriate tool to start discussions and to correct a situation which should be improved, but we must not forget that, in the end, the farmers' only objective is to put their products on the Canadian market in order to meet the producers' needs and to receive a fair reward for their work.

It does not matter much whether butter produced in Quebec is sold in Vancouver, Edmonton or Regina, as long as the producer receives a retribution for his work. That the pound of beef produced at Edmonton or Regina should be sold in Montreal, Quebec or Toronto matters little as long as the producer is paid for his work.

I think it is necessary first to consider things from both the national and the regional point of view. Unfortunately, as a committee member I could notice during the trip

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that the tendency was to think on a regional rather than on a national basis.

Marketing councils will be able to establish marketing agencies upon request from the majority of interested producers. These agencies will evidently be able to operate if there are provincial agreements, agreements which could be quickly negotiated if there is good will and if everybody sees the possibility of helping producers all across the country.

If such marketing agencies are contested, discussed and their case brought before courts, who is going to pay for all this which is going from bad to worse? It will still be the producers. Who is going to suffer the consequences? The consumers!

That is why I deplore the fact the the marketing council does not have the required powers to negotiate in an intelligent manner. In the end, however, there must always be some authority having the power to decide, to settle the question.

Having studied all the briefs submitted to them, the members of the committee came back to Ottawa and sat for long hours trying to put down on paper the amendments suggested in order to make this legislation as perfect as possible.

Some amendments were accepted, others were not. Maybe they will again be discussed in the House. One of them deals with the exclusion of certain products: beef and veal for instance.

If Bill C-176 is such as to help egg, poultry, wool, maple syrup or honey producers, I firmly believe that it could also help the other producers provided this is their desire.

I am gratified to see that the bill provides that a marketing agency may be established by the Marketing Council upon the request of a majority of a class of producers.

This is a safety valve. As is the case with other members, I have received representations from beef producers across the country, through their association, asking that this class of products be excluded from the bill as, according to them, they have no need for these provisions at the present time.

I am willing to believe that they are right and that this is not absolutely necessary for the time being, but at the national level we must pass legislation which will be available to all producers.

I entertain no absolute confidence in the effectiveness of this legislation, and I think that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) is able to anticipate that its administration will be extremely difficult. A considerable amount of goodwill will be required to achieve the establishment of marketing boards that may actually operate and provide practical results that will satisfy all producers.

There is a problem, however. I have listened attentively to the minister. If I am wrong, he can correct me. I understood that he had stated that there was no question,