

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

in which a similar matter was raised. He said at that time:

For this reason I think any such scheme should be worked out amongst the farmers themselves.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCutcheon: How times change! I guess your view depends upon where you sit. I support the amendment which has been brought in by the hon. member for Crowfoot because it will prevent all the things the Minister of Agriculture was terribly concerned about a number of years ago. I remember something else the minister said. I do not have the quotation here, but he will remember that when there was a slight problem of patronage in the Post Office he became quite eloquent in his condemnation of it. I am not suggesting for one minute that there would be patronage in the appointment of these marketing board people, but there is the possibility that it might happen. Therefore, I think the amendment of the hon. member for Crowfoot is most appropriate. It reads in part:

"this House will not proceed upon a measure to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products where the establishment of such agencies is in the discretion of the government and the appointment of members to such agencies is in the gift and at the pleasure of the government—

Wow! Another matter which concerns me is that decisions will be made for farmers by people with no practical experience, period. They will probably have Ph.Ds. They will be economists, academics, and all the rest. The type of recommendation they will come up with is that which is found on page 8 of "Canadian Agriculture in the Seventies". This is a dandy heading. I hope that some day somebody will be able to explain to me what it means. I will just read this heading:

—increasing planning and contractual arrangements resulting in backward, forward, horizontal integration.

These are the birds—I use that word advisedly—who will be making decisions for practical farmers, unless the minister gives us assurance that there will be practical people on the boards. I have heard it said that if we had a group of economists laid end to end from B.C. to Newfoundland, we still would not come up with an opinion. I think there is some truth in that.

The preceding speaker said this bill could be amended so far as virtually everything in it was concerned, if only it got to the committee. We know that is not the case, because the government is not bound to make any

[Mr. McCutcheon.]

changes so far as principle is concerned. I know that I speak for many farm organizations when I say we are pleased the minister has given us the assurance that the modifications and amendments which we desire will be included in the bill.

I have here a letter from an organization of Alberta farmers who were sucked in with the misinformation, or whatever it was, that was given out. I know they will now be happy because the mistake has been smoked-out, and witnesses can be called before the committee and, hopefully, the bill can be repaired to such an extent that it will be acceptable. Again I say to the Minister of Agriculture, "Please see to it that there are practical people on these boards so that we do not hear a lot of double-talk; so that, hopefully, this legislation will do a job for the agricultural community and for the consumers".

• (4:00 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty as well as my privilege to speak on Bill C-197, entitled "An Act to establish the National Farm Products Marketing Council and to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products".

First of all, although I agree with the ideas expressed by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Côté), who represents the Richelieu constituency, I do not appreciate the need for such a bill. In fact, this is what he had to say in the House, on June 4 last, as recorded at page 7761 of *Hansard*:

Then, as my hon. friend pointed out, the cows will be well looked after. They seem to be doing quite well indeed, because of the government's policy.

So the Parliamentary Secretary to the minister believes that "the cows are well looked after" by the government and that the Canadian agriculture is in good health. This is probably why, as he says himself so well, he felt prompted to sell his cows a few days after the election. I understand him perfectly well because, no doubt, it pays more to have one in Parliament than to have 25 of them in the barn, the way things are going nowadays.

This is perhaps what my hon. friend from Richelieu was referring to when he stated that the cows were well looked after. I do not want to dwell any longer upon the subject and I shall deal then with Bill C-197.