

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

was not done because it was necessary, but because we did not put in the necessary limitations. The Minister of Agriculture is now going back to put in some of the limitations that should have already been there.

I am in order to speak about these matters because they bear directly on this amendment. Your Honour even suggested that we take this amendment in conjunction with amendments 5 and 22, which are fairly broad amendments. I am aware of the courtesy of the House in extending my time and I do not intend to take advantage of that, but I must state that we are not only concerned about this bill but about the effects of it.

The hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Faulkner) should look at the record. I heartily recommend to him this article which appeared in the *Montreal Star*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, and a number of magazines. I think it is quite factual. It states exactly what would happen to a small farm operation in a small community. I fear that thousands of people across Canada will think we are changing the whole rural game. For this reason, we should give very serious consideration to every amendment to this bill. If this bill is passed, it should be the most considered and advantageous bill possible.

Mr. Gerald Richard Cobbe (Parliamentary Secretary to Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, this bill has received much discussion over the past number of months and I am certainly pleased to have had the opportunity to participate in the debate. This legislation constitutes a very big change in the agricultural industry, one which I feel is most necessary if the agricultural industry is going to survive within the society we live in today.

We must look at the way all other organizations exist. Regardless of what type of work you do, you are organized by your members for the benefit of those who are involved. The hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) referred to the fact that 250,000 farmers must go. It appears that each time someone is paid to write a report on agriculture, it automatically becomes government policy. It is obvious that the hon. member has not read the small farms development program which the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) very recently announced. If, after reading this, he still believes it is the government's plan to remove people from the farms, then I suggest he has the wrong understanding of this legislation. The sole desire of this legislation is to have as many producers as possible operate in an economic unit.

The amendment of the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) proposes the removal of beef and veal products from clause 2. In considering this, I have to ask myself several questions. Who is covered in the bill and who is not? How does one qualify? What must one do to take advantage of the bill? We have gone through this many times, Mr. Speaker. Whether you are listed in the bill or not listed is not important. If any commodity group that is organized asks to come within this bill, no government will deny them this opportunity.

We must remember that this is permissive legislation designed for those who choose to use it. How does one qualify to operate under this bill? Most of us are quite familiar with the procedure that must be followed. There must be marketing boards in the provinces which are interested in the program. They in turn must agree to

[Mr. Peters.]

establish a national marketing board. The contents of the legislation are solely for the purpose of their operations once they have established the plan under which they choose to operate. The plan they choose, design and draft themselves is far more important than what is in this present legislation.

• (4:10 p.m.)

These are the controls which are to be imposed on any organization. The producers themselves will decide. Some people say they will not have the opportunity, but I say it is provided in the bill that should any area of Canada which produces a significant amount of the commodity referred to choose not to establish a national marketing plan, there is no way in which a plan can be established. It is obvious they must get agreement before a plan can be presented for approval.

Now I must look at what this bill can do for producers. In discussing agricultural commodities there are two areas of concern. There are those who are producing in a surplus position, and those who are producing not in a surplus position. Those who are producing in a surplus position are definitely asking us to pass this legislation. It is important that these people be organized and have some control over the production of their products, how the product is handled and what price they can get for it. These are the only people who can make those decisions.

As far as a product which is being produced but is not in surplus is concerned, there are quite a few of these but they are diminishing each year. These people have a different area to serve. First, how do they prevent themselves from getting into a surplus position? There are certain areas to which they must give consideration. I refer to such things as market research. There are many areas of market research which in my estimation should be explored in a manner in which they are not being explored today. For example, I have heard there is a potential market for pork in Japan. The federal government, through the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, has explored this possibility and has been successful in getting some of the barriers removed so that we may ship pork there. A boatload of pork was shipped to Japan to see how the Japanese people liked our product.

Once a market is established, who takes over the job of assuring that we keep this market? I say that once we capture a market and get into the business of supply management a commodity group is the most likely body to handle affairs. I know this is a contentious point because supply management works both ways. Once you establish a market you must guarantee that you will produce sufficient of the product to supply that market, and this is as important as any other control.

There have been requests that import controls be included in this legislation, and that commodity groups should be given a measure of control over imports. It is obvious that if any one commodity group were given control over the import of the product it produced, it would immediately stop that product from coming in, and hon. members know the chain reaction which would then take place.

There are many opportunities for the government to work with commodity groups. This is apparent from some