

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

Now, when people are no longer their own masters as regards food, they are subdued, they are slaves, they are "on all fours". Their freedom is destroyed. From that time on, they depend entirely on the government for their food, which is revolting.

Never, Mr. Speaker, shall I agree to the passage of this bill which will enable our governments to control calves, cows, hogs, bees, maples, eggs, milk and wheat, producers and consumers, prices and incomes.

I accuse this government, and particularly the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Côté) who is a farmer in name only of having deliberately created such an alarming situation that we would appear justified in committing ourselves to socialism. Through government measures, implemented in the past, we began by getting family farms into debt, on the advice of the government. Farmers throughout Canada were advised to improve their lands, their buildings, their herds, their business and their equipment. Farmers engaged in all types of farming in Canada have, therefore, gone deep into debt, on the advice and the instructions of the government to such an extent that they are now facing bankruptcy or reduced to leaving their farm.

• (5:00 p.m.)

Last year, in Quebec alone, more than 13,000 dairy producers gave up production. They left the land to join the ranks of the unemployed in the cities, or went on welfare in one way or another, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture would say. They are dependent on the government for their living. The regressive policy of wheat and milk quotas, for instance, drove independent producers and owners to the wall.

The government, through the Canadian Dairy Commission and the Canadian Wheat Board, implemented restrictive and punitive legislation in the past, the effects of which can still be seen now. The incomes of the producers were whittled down because they got so deeply into debt under the present government, or else they had to give up their land, or continue to have the government ride rough-shod over them.

Bill C-197 crowns this policy whose purpose is to crush private enterprise. What a shame!

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the House a concrete example of that stupidity which is encouraged by such brilliant people as the Parliamentary Secretary and the minister.

[Mr. Fortin.]

I have here an article published recently in a farm magazine. It reads:

The Ministers of the European Economic Community (Common Market) have adopted recently a program to encourage farmers to reduce the volume of the dairy production.

Mr. Speaker, it is because the governments encouraged them that the producers have improved their production and their equipment. Today, the government, because it did not take care of the distribution of the purchasing power among the consumers, thinks it has found a solution in setting up a marketing plan which is aimed at putting the independent farmers out of business. From land owners, they will become frustrated city proletarians.

I go on with my quotation:

For the small farmers keeping 10 cows or less (EEC plan) the program grants a premium of \$200 for each cow slaughtered and not replaced. The farmers with 10 cows or more will receive a \$200 premium per cow provided they refrain from delivering milk to the dairy industry and the manufacturers.

There is a strange likeness between this grant for slaughtering and the one handed by the federal government to the wheat producers for staying cosily at home and producing nothing. That likeness extends also to the Quebec milk producers who were asked to stop production.

And the quotation goes on:

It will remain effective until 250,000 cows have been slaughtered and until payment is made of equivalent amounts for stopping the channeling of milk into the commercial stream. The ministers will then decide whether the program is to be maintained or discontinued.

Instead of the consumers being supplied with enough money to use up production, the producers are penalized because they work and, at the same time, the unemployed and the people on welfare, in the cities, are encouraged to remain a burden for the country.

We should cheer up, however, because economists-politicians from the old countries are not any smarter than ours. In fact, they are just as stupid.

The ridiculous income of a Canadian farmer forces him to sell his cows to the butcher at the price offered and he then becomes a welfare case. Whatever the Parliamentary Secretary may say about this, if he is honest he will admit that from a producer-owner, the farmer, under the heel of the government, becomes a frustrated, demoralized