

protecting the producers by this type of legislation; participation of producers is also involved. If the operations of agencies such as the Canadian Dairy Commission, the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners are out of the reach of the farmer, and the farmer does not take part in the decision-making process, in the absence of two-way communication sooner or later he will regard them as one of his worst enemies even though he may now regard them as his friend.

This situation can only be avoided if individual producers have a working knowledge of the operations of such agencies and how they are trying to assist him. Through this understanding the farmer will be able to take the good with the bad. The nature of marketing activities is such that at times things get a bit rough. Unless there is two-way communication the farmers will run into trouble with the marketing agencies, whatever their stripe, be they government commissions or producers' agencies. Once there is a breakdown in communication and understanding between producer and marketing agency, you are in real trouble.

Those are the thoughts that I wish to express this afternoon. As the bill moves into committee I hope we will be able to work toward meeting our objectives. As I say, I should like those organizations who have written to members of the House saying they are either in favour or against the measure to appear before the committee, state what they like or do not like about the bill and give their reasons. In this way the members of the committee will be able to make a reasoned, value judgment of how we should change the legislation.

**Mr. F. J. Bigg (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to support the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). It is a pleasure to follow the previous speaker because he has great experience in farming matters. Before becoming the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggan he was president of the Saskatchewan Farm Union and, as I say, he speaks with great authority of farm matters. He has taken a very fair attitude in the debate which has taken a few days to bring it to this stage.

Had the minister wanted to rush this legislation through, it would have been quite simple for him to assure the House which specific amendments would be acceptable or even encouraged in committee. The subject of marketing boards is not new. The Saskatche-

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wan Farm Union, the former farm union of Alberta, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and now Unifarm, a combination of these two, are unanimous in saying that uniformity and common sense should be brought to the orderly marketing of farm products.

No farm union—I repeat, no farm union—has ever recommended handing over responsibility for decision-making, consultation and the composition of such boards to a group other than itself. I do not know why any government or minister would suggest in legislation, in this House or in committee that such a program could be foisted on the Canadian people. I am not satisfied with a sort of blanket assurance that everything in committee will be well. We have found from sad experience that the proper time to change the principle of a bill is on second reading when its principle is under discussion. Once the bill is sent to committee, often the government feels that it has a free hand to do what it likes.

I have before me a letter from the president of Unifarm, which represents 30,000 farmers in Alberta, the great bulk of family farmers in that province. In paragraph 4 the letter states:

● (4:50 p.m.)

Our main concerns are in regard to representation on both the proposed marketing council and the marketing agencies which could be established under it.

The following appears in the previous paragraph:

We understand that desirable changes could be introduced at that stage.

As the former speaker said, and I agree, it is our duty to see that more than pious promises are given. We want to see commitments in black and white. After all, the minister's promises are binding only on himself. We do not know what the vagaries of the summer may bring. We know that Bill C-196 is still before the committee and that Bill C-197 cannot be passed in the few days remaining in this session.

**Mr. Olson:** I hope it can.

**Mr. Bigg:** A pious hope cannot put it through. The committee is seized with Bill C-196. I understand that the marketing agencies have proposed 87 amendments.

**Mr. Olson:** All members need do is get on with it.