

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

fluid milk producer in Ontario ranked fairly high in the agricultural industry. When we set up the Canadian Dairy Commission and went into the industrial milk field, and when we said that milk could be taken from the fluid milk field and applied to the industrial milk field, and vice versa, it had taken us 25 years to reach that point. We said that farmers in the seventies will need to buy great bulk tanks. Farmers will need milk boilers and great stanchion barns. All these the farmers will need to meet higher health standards in Canada. The result was that the little farmer owning only five or ten cows did not think that the required \$20,000 investment in his operation was worth while; consequently, he went out of business. I know that he only needed to have 480 pounds of butterfat and that this could be secured from the production of two or three good cows. However, the little farmer did not have two or three good cows, or the bulk tank or the barn. Since his cattle was of poor quality, he felt it was necessary for him to go into the production of other commodities.

In the last few years we have attempted to control the production and sale of broilers and poultry. I believe that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) will, after an amendment to a certain bill has been proclaimed, be able to exercise control over eggs or poultry products. At least, that is what some think the effect of the legislation will be. I suggest that it is not quite that simple. What will we have done by passing that legislation? We all agree that we cannot force that kind of legislation on a province. We decided that, and it is not true to say that the Supreme Court made that decision. We just have not taken that matter to the Supreme Court for its advice. At any rate, we admit that the provinces will need to make a decision in this field. At the same time, we are sitting here during a period when civil servants who sometimes think they are not well treated are on holiday, and we are discussing this bill. Our specific purpose is to include eggs and poultry in it.

Hearings were held in Ontario to decide whether there should be an egg marketing board set up in Ontario. This was some time ago. After the hearings, a vote was taken, and that vote was overwhelmingly against the establishment of such a board. A number of years later a vote was again taken on this subject, and again the idea of a board was turned down. It was subsequently decided to withdraw this matter from the political arena and establish a commission. Judge Ross was appointed and went around the province. He was in Ottawa about a week ago last Monday and held a hearing. I was not present, but I gather that it was not much different from the hearing that had been held in London, and is similar to the one that will be held in Toronto.

People at all those hearings did not agree on the establishment of boards. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Surely everyone assumes that the guy who is producing eggs will support the establishment of a board controlling them. This sounds fairly reasonable. Why did not those people support such boards? I suggest the reason is that the owners of hens really would vote on a board.

• (4:00 p.m.)

Who owns the hens? A half dozen people own the majority of the hens in Ontario.

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An hon. Member: The feed companies.

Mr. Peters: As the hon. member points out, it is the feed companies. They have nothing to do with this. They only have a vertically integrated operation. In many cases the egg producer is being paid on a similar basis to that in the province of Quebec where the producer is paid 10 cents a bird to produce broilers. Everyone knows he is the hired man of the feed company.

We are not talking about the person who peddles his eggs on the street. The person I am talking about is the one who buys his eggs or has a few hens at home, where he and his wife are conducting a small operation and he peddles his eggs around town. He will not be hurt by a board. He can still peddle his eggs, legally or illegally. People can come from town to his farm, if the price is right and buy eggs. The people bothered about a board are those on the small end of the operation.

A person in Ontario stated to the commission that the day a board is created for eggs, someone will be a millionaire because he will have a quota of over \$1 million. It will not change anything else. Surely that is not what we want to accomplish, unless we agree with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson), the Department of Agriculture and the former law professor from Saskatoon. We are not interested in eliminating the family farms in Canada.

Mr. Olson: Neither are we.

Mr. Peters: I do not see why we should put the farmer off the farm, bring him into the city and put him on welfare. He has a job to do and he does it. It is true, in many cases, that his farm is inefficient. His marketing is inefficient. Why are we aiming to get him off the land at any price?

Mr. Faulkner: That is pure nonsense. Stop inventing the stuff.

Mr. Peters: The hon. member says that is pure nonsense. When an NDP government was elected in Manitoba, what was one of the first things it had to do? This government has been going around giving away money. It will give a farmer \$50,000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member for Timiskaming can relate his remarks to the amendment before the House. Without being critical, I suggest that maybe he should do so.

Mr. Faulkner: This is pure garbage.

Mr. Peters: What are we asked to do in this amendment? We are dealing with all farm products. We are asked to limit those farm products and to remove by-products of agriculture. I think it is perfectly in order to indicate that the small producers in this country are being eliminated. They will not be able to compete. This clause refers to any natural product of agriculture. Basically, we are talking about produce in its natural state. If this is what is left, I think everyone will agree that agribusiness will be the only form of agricultural production in this country.

There will be a period of transition. The hon. member does not believe that, but the facts speak for themselves. He need only look at the Canadian Dairy Commission to see the results of that act on the western farmers. This