

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

cation. That qualification provides that such other products of agriculture do not come under those other provisions of the bill unless the governor in council is satisfied that the majority of producers want an agency.

The amendment indicates how the governor in council is to determine the will of the majority. This must be done through provincial declarations following plebiscites, or otherwise. Finally, it should be pointed out that this requirement was not attached to eggs and poultry products because we have been advised by a number of provincial ministers of agriculture and, directly, by poultry producers that they want an agency. That is to say, agreement has been reached, I understand, with the egg producers, formal meetings having been held over a period of months to this end.

I so move that amendment, Mr. Speaker, to the motion in the name of the hon. member for Crowfoot. I hope that there will be a measure of agreement in the House, because the amendment is the result of considerable discussion and effort in finding a consensus on this particular part of the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps I ought to put the motion to the House. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), seconded by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Lang), moves—

Some hon. Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Shall I dispense?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, strange things happen underground and I cannot help reflecting on the last two years of work on this bill. I well remember February 25, 1971, when I pleaded with the members of the agricultural committee to change clause 2 and to make it applicable to the poultry industry only. I solemnly promised that I would assist the committee and the minister to get the bill through the House and, in the following week, to get the bill through the Senate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Horner: The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) at that time said, "No, I want clause 2 to include vegetables." I said, "What vegetables?" He said, "Potatoes". I said, "That is strange; so far as I am aware no potato producers have come before the agricultural committee to argue the case for supply management regarding that industry." To convince the committee that I was in a conciliatory mood on February 25, I said that I would be prepared to have included in clause 2 of the bill the poultry industry and the vegetable industry, and the products thereof. The minister said that no, it was not good enough, because he wanted to include all products.

Today the government has come back to the position of spelling out that, except for eggs and poultry, all other commodities are to be governed by boards set up on a voluntary basis. Why could we not have done that right from the beginning? It is regrettable that originally the government did not treat all products alike.

Why should eggs and poultry be excluded from the general provisions of the bill? Why are the members of

[Mr. MacEachen.]

that industry to have no choice? I claim that the government is interfering with the rights of that industry. Indeed, a commission in Ontario this very day is studying the question whether egg producers in that province want to enter into a supply management scheme. It is trying to determine whether egg producers want quotas, whether in fact they support a marketing bill. Yet this government seeks to override that commission; the national government is saying that eggs need to come under a marketing bill, that the egg producers in Ontario need a marketing bill.

The federal government in this respect is interfering with rights of natural justice. A commission is very much like a court, and a commission is hearing the case of egg producers. Farmers and producers are submitting arguments to that commission at this very time. This government is interfering with a commission in Ontario that, in essence, is constituted like a court.

I am surprised that the NDP members in this House are prepared to go along with this. I suppose they say that these provisions are better than nothing. May I refer to something that was printed in this morning's *Globe and Mail*. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is reported as saying that his party wants all products to be treated alike, and that is the way it should be. He was referring to the cattle industry, I believe, and the desire of cattlemen to opt out of the provisions of this bill. He said that although he does not like the proposed amendment, his party will go along with it but that they want all products to be treated alike.

• (3:50 p.m.)

He was not being very clear, because this amendment does not treat all products alike. It provides that eggs, poultry and any such products are automatically included. When it comes to the poultry industry, the government knows best. The people who are in difficulty in the poultry industry are the feed manufacturers who have invested large sums of money in various farming families in order to build up big enterprises in egg and broiler production. This bill says, in effect: We know you are in difficulty and we intend to build a great deal of security into your establishments. I say to Your Honour that the Ben Beauregards of this industry will be for ever wealthy after this bill passes. They will be wealthy for as far into the future as I can see, as will their children and their grandchildren, because the government has brought them security. We see the youth of this nation walking the streets and looking for opportunities wherever they may find them. They can go to colleges and universities. They can acquire all the knowledge they please about the poultry industry. But all this will not get them into the industry; to do that they will have to marry a rich widow, or marry into a poultry family. They will need money to get into the industry after this bill has provided for its security.

In British Columbia, if a farmer wants to increase his quota by one dozen extra eggs a week, it costs him \$385. Imagine how many years into the future a person would have to sell a dozen eggs a week in order to pay for a quota which cost \$385 to secure.

The prices of poultry products to the consumer will rise. Many people have accused me of being motivated during this debate by self-interest. Well, I suppose I should be