

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

of the services of a national marketing agency at the present time. Tobacco, as hon. members know, is grown only in limited areas of Canada. In Ontario we operate under a somewhat rigidly controlled system operated by a board which was set up by a 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of producers. However, in other parts of this country the tobacco industry is only in the development stage, and growers would not wish to have controls imposed upon them such as those in Ontario find acceptable. Another factor which causes some people to view Bill C-197 with a measure of suspicion is the experience of dairy producers operating under the Dairy Commission. In many cases the experience has been good, but some producers have found their production curtailed to a quantity below the level necessary for efficient operation.

I stated earlier that I did not intend to prolong this debate unduly. I say in conclusion that I accept wholeheartedly the principle of this bill, but I want the details spelled out in black and white so that they cannot be changed at the whim of a minister. The participation of producers in policy-making is essential. Unless the government accepts this point of view in committee, it will encounter further opposition when the bill comes back to the House for third reading. We want to make it abundantly clear that when this legislation is finally written into the statute books, production is controlled by the primary producers and decisions are made by the producers themselves in their own best interests.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I think it is in order to say once again that this bill is one of the two most important pieces of legislation affecting agriculture which have been presented to Parliament this session. The other bill, of course, was the one to change the grading of grain and deal with other aspects of the grain trade in both eastern and western Canada.

Reference has been made to the amount of time which has been taken to debate this piece of legislation. In my opinion the bill deserves a great deal of debate. After all, it will affect the methods of production and marketing employed in respect of a great many farm products. Also, of course, it will affect the livelihood of many thousands of farmers. So as far as we in this party are concerned, we are not worried about the amount of time which has been taken to discuss the bill. When it gets to the committee we intend to propose changes, the first objec-

tive being to ensure that farmers participate in the decision-making process; that they do not simply act on the direction of government administrators no matter how capable they may be.

● (4:40 p.m.)

We have received representations from farm groups who wish to use this legislation. The turkey producers marketing board of Saskatchewan have been in touch with me and indicated they want this bill passed in a workable form because they want to use this type of legislation co-operatively with producers in other provinces. We have also received representations from other farm organizations. It is significant that in letters written to other members of this party as well as myself major farm organizations have mentioned repeatedly that the bill should provide for producer participation in decision-making. They suggest that the commissioners appointed under the bill be nominated, wherever possible, by farm organizations and producer groups.

One thing about this bill that has surprised me is that no specific provision was included in the original draft for the participation of producers in matters dealing with the operation of the bill, the kind of products it will control and the markets to which produce will be directed. We are moving into an era when this sort of legislation is becoming increasingly important, an era when patterns of production and marketing will progressively be controlled not by individual farmers but by organizations, in some cases not by government but by the industry itself.

I recall that a few years ago some of the big chain stores in Regina decided to buy their eggs from Manitoba instead of from the egg producers close to Regina. As a result, the Regina egg producers who had been supplying these chain stores found they had no retail outlets. Since eggs must be delivered to market quickly and must be fresh, this meant that some egg producers literally were put out of business on, if I remember rightly, two or three weeks' or one month's notice. As the saying goes, they were all dressed up but had nowhere to go.

This is the kind of marketing situation that we have to live with today, and it is the basic reason we want this bill to go to committee. There I hope the government will be prepared to take a hard look at some of the provisions in the bill to ensure that the producers are fully protected. It is not a question simply of

[Mr. Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand).]