

*Private Members' Business*

tion on supply management and supply managed products. Finally, I will put forward some viable alternatives to government involvement through new supply managed industries.

The stated purpose of this bill is to ensure the orderly marketing of potatoes having due regard to the interests of producers as well as to consumers. It would establish a corporate body to be known as the Canadian potato marketing commission.

The commission would be composed of five to nine members who would not receive pay from government. The commission would operate in a somewhat similar fashion to that of the Canadian Wheat Board. It would act as a sole marketing agent for all imported potatoes and for potatoes produced in Canada.

• (1150)

The commission, using a permit book system as the wheat board does, would pay producers to sell potatoes to the board. What we would have is a single desk buyer as we have with the Canadian Wheat Board.

Payments made to the consolidated revenue fund to offset any expenses the commission may have must be approved by Parliament. I was encouraged to see at least in the proposal there was the recognition that when we come to an expenditure of taxpayers' money in order to have proper accountability it should have approval by Parliament and not just by governor in council, the cabinet or the minister. That is what this bill is about.

This bill has been attempted before and has failed. The member for Mackenzie has attempted to pass the same bill. Bill C-246, an act respecting the orderly marketing of potatoes, received first reading on May 30, 1989. Bill C-252, an act respecting the orderly marketing of potatoes, received first reading June 19, 1991. Now here we go again with Bill C-266, an act respecting the orderly marketing of potatoes. I wonder if this member is trying to make an argument in favour of term limits for politicians so that we get new ideas into this House, ideas that change with the changing market conditions.

The fact this is the third time in six years the same member has put forward the same bill certainly indicates one thing: he holds an ideology; he sticks to his ideology regardless of whether or not producers agree with that ideology. Hon. members opposite have presented an overview of the state of the potato marketing industry and the general lack of support on the part of farmers and processors for this type of a bill.

An attempt was also made in 1980 to establish a potato marketing agency for eastern Canada. Public hearings were held, reports were submitted and the idea failed. The national potato agency task force presented its report for a program for the marketing of potatoes in Canada to the minister of agricul-

ture and the chairman of the National Farm Products Marketing Council on November 17, 1986 but nothing came of it.

In February 1988 the National Farm Products Marketing Council submitted a report on the inquiry into the merits of establishing a national marketing agency for potatoes. On April 28, 1988 Judge Teitelbaum of the Federal Court of Canada trial division at the request of a group of potato processors issued an order quashing the report. The conclusions and recommendations contained in the report were never implemented.

In the past there was never enough collective enthusiasm to implement a potato marketing agency. In the present it is not an idea whose time has come. In fact it is clearly an idea whose time has gone.

With the passage of the Uruguay round of GATT, the free trade agreement and NAFTA, the existing government co-ordinated marketing agencies have come under fire. In recent news stories we have heard some of the results of Canada putting tariff levels at the rate they are in other supply managed industries. There is a lot of pressure particularly from our largest trading partner, the United States, to have a rapid reduction in the tariff protection in the present supply managed industries. I am surprised the hon. member is proposing to put in place a new supply managed industry board under this type of situation.

On January 28 the Canadian Wheat Board was under fire because it requires end user certificates on imported American wheat. The Americans' response is to impose end user certificates on Canadian wheat entering the United States. If this threat were to become a reality the result would indeed cause a large problem for Canadian grain farmers who do ship Canadian grain into the United States. It would cause an increase in paperwork and another level of regulation which is totally unwanted and not needed by farmers.

• (1155)

The United States has also served notice that it plans to challenge Canada's new import duties on dairy and poultry products. I mentioned this a few minutes ago. The levels set under GATT according to the United States really go against the spirit and the terms of NAFTA. That is the argument the United States has been using. Again, the mood just is not there on the part of the United States and certainly on the part of Canadian potato farmers for a new supply managed industry, especially when that industry is potatoes.

In terms of the disputes with the United States, who ends up being hurt by these disputes? It is not the bureaucrats who are hurt; it keeps them employed. It is not the politicians who are hurt; it gives them the spotlight and keeps their names in the news for a little longer. In the end it is the farmers who lose from these disputes. We want to do nothing that will encourage trading disputes.