

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

trouble among the distinguished amateurs on the other side who do not have the experience of parliamentary government that they should possess.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: I hope this is not the view of a number of government supporters on the other side, Mr. Speaker. We shall have to wait and see. While we sit around watching television and are lulled to sleep by the glamorizing of leadership by the cult of personalities who have no message to deliver except that of the medium on which they perform, which in turn is fascinated by its own creation, true freedom and liberty is being frittered away. All this going on before a press which, I am afraid, in many instances is becoming rich, lazy and slovenly and seems incapable of mounting a sustained attack against this ruthless push toward authoritarianism. The shadow of "the man on horseback" grows ever larger over this land.

Let me prove my case in the present instance by specific reference to parts of the bill before us. The Minister of Agriculture—and here again I endorse the position taken by my hon. friend from Swift Current-Maple Creek—has sought to conceal the immense and unprecedented power the government seeks to attain over the agricultural industry. Contrary to the minister's claim that the proposals here require co-operative consultation with the Canadian public and with the provinces, the bill envisages a government take over of all decision-making in Canadian agriculture, one which within its scope would take away every right which Canadians possess, from freedom to follow an occupation to consumer choice.

The bill proposes that Parliament grant to the government a monopoly of the agricultural industry in Canada excepting only inter-provincial and export marketing of grain and dairy products. An attempt is made to camouflage these government powers. This was done by the minister in his explanatory statement. Here again, I agree with my hon. friend from Swift Current-Maple Creek. By providing that the council and the supporting staff shall be public servants appointed by the government, hon. gentlemen opposite have ensured that the council will become a departmental agency of the government and, therefore, completely subject to cabinet or ministerial direction.

If the government directs the council to hold an inquiry into the question of establish-

[Mr. Baldwin.]

ing an agency, broadening the powers of an agency or reviewing a proposed marketing plan, the council is required to hold public meetings. But the power of the government to establish an agency without an inquiry, or to broaden an agency's powers or to put a marketing plan into operation is not dependent upon the council holding public hearings—and there is the vital difference between this and the plan established by the Ontario government. As to the agency which is to have powers pertaining to any farm product or products, Mr. Driedger, a former Deputy Minister of Justice, has stated that the phrasing in the bill embraced the power to make any regulation for any purpose having to do with the product concerned.

The agency is effectively removed from any surveillance by Parliament except for whatever may be contained in the annual report. The accounts of an agency are to be audited by an auditor appointed by the government. Once the government takes over control of a product of agriculture, the segment of the industry concerned must sink or swim. The bill provides that the agency must operate on a self-sustaining basis without appropriations from Parliament. If marketing of the particular product flounders financially, the government has power to wind up an agency's affairs and dissolve the agency.

I wish to make special reference to clauses 34 and 37. Clause 34 is the one authorizing inspections. Surely it is not our intention as a responsible Parliament to place in the hands of government-appointed inspectors the right to enter any dwellinghouse, without the necessity of applying for a search warrant, merely to examine books or records which they think may relate to regulated products, particularly since this action can be taken against people who are not voluntary participants in any marketing schemes, who have had no voice in their preparation and who want nothing to do with them. Indeed, they may know nothing about them until an inspector calls.

● (9:20 p.m.)

Finally, I turn to the clause dealing with offences, under which a penalty of up to two years' imprisonment can be imposed on any person who violates any provision of a marketing plan or fails to comply with a requirement of the council pursuant to clause 7. In other words, if an agency sets up a plan, all the persons involved, whether producers or not, must comply with it rigidly, whether they are in favour of it or not, whether or not