

Some Hon. Senators: At the next sitting.
Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURE

CRISIS FOR FARM MARKETING BOARD—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Olson, P.C., calling the attention of the Senate to the crisis facing Canada's farm marketing Board.—
(Honourable Senator Olson, P.C.).

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I wanted to say a few words on this now, because time is running out again.

The negotiations that were started in Uruguay about five years ago are now coming to a head. I think the minister told us earlier today in Question Period that Canada's response to Mr. Dunkel's script had to be filed tomorrow, I believe it was. I think he also said a few minutes ago, or a couple hours ago now, that they were not going to tell the Canadian producers what Canada was going to file because it was a negotiating position they were going to file or deposit, or submit or whatever the right word is.

It is extremely important that we keep reminding the government about how important these marketing agencies are to certain producers because I do not think anybody over there realizes how long it takes and how difficult it is, with the trials and tribulations of getting these marketing agencies in place on behalf of the producers.

By the way, I would expect a speech highly supportive of my position from Senator Roblin. I would think he would be making a speech because all the egg producers in Manitoba have probably gained more from this legislation than any producers anywhere in Canada, because of course their market primarily for most of their egg produce is outside of the province of Manitoba. Their market is primarily in Ontario, but they ship eggs, of course, to many other parts of Canada too. There has been some marketing structure set up under the enabling legislation that has been very useful and profitable. I might say it provided some stability to the egg producers in that province that they never had before.

Now, as I said, we are getting into the final stages of this issue. The producers have always said that they want to support the government in what it is doing. The government, including the Prime Minister, keeps saying, for public consumption at least, that they are working hard to protect and clarify Article II of the GATT so that these marketing agencies can continue to do what they have been doing in Canada. The problem is that we keep hearing that some of the producers who have been on these delegations to Brussels and to Geneva, and other places where the negotiations have been going on, are apprehensive that the government, to put it very briefly, will say, "Well, you know, we tried. We tried really hard, but we couldn't make it."

I heard the Prime Minister say himself that he was not going to back away from the negotiations because they did not

win on this particular thing, because that is what they want us to do. Well, I don't know who wants them to do that. I don't know who the "they" is. In any event, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture, and Mr. Wilson, the Minister of Trade, have all continued to give us assurances that they are working hard and making great efforts to maintain these marketing agencies.

Just on February 21, Mr. Gerard Kiely, the spokesman for the European Community Agriculture Commissioner Ray MacSharry, said very bluntly:

The response to Canada is no.

Trade Minister Michael Wilson said on February 21, just a few days ago:

(There are) differences between where we are coming from and where they are coming from.

He is telling us that they are not winning, that they are not making any progress in spite of all the promises that they made that they are working so hard.

Then another gentleman, who is spokesman for the EC Agriculture Group, whose name is Jens-Peter Myllerup—I think this is the same man I talked to in Geneva about three years ago respecting this Uruguay round of discussions—had this to say:

We have no interest in supporting the Canadian position.

I talked to him some time ago when I was in Geneva with a group of parliamentarians. I asked him about the \$30 billion that the European countries are paying by way of subsidies to their farmers. The United States was insisting that they declare they were going to take that down to zero in ten years, at least at that time. I do not know if the United States are still in that position, but that is what they were insisting.

● (1230)

And the argument went that the industrial establishment in Europe, especially from in Germany, was getting tired of paying that \$30 billion into the farm subsidy sector. He turned to me and he said very, very quietly, "Don't hold your breath." He was from Germany, by the way, but he was one of the spokesmen for the EC. He said they are not getting tired of it. There is a completely different attitude with respect to food production there than you seem to realize. Any country that has been short of food—and of course they were during the last war—has a lot of respect for any policies that will continue to produce large quantities of good wholesome food.

So don't hold your breath if you think they are getting tired of it. There were some other political implications, too, about Chancellor Kohl needing the political support from a couple of provinces that were major food producers, Bavaria and some others. I understand that kind of language.

So this is the problem. But the main thing is to know from this government that they are not going to back away when it gets critical. As I said a few minutes ago, they should not come along and say, "Sorry we didn't make it, but we tried hard."

I have several quotations here of statements by the Prime Minister. I will give you the most recent one, from February