

*Farm Machinery*

written arrangements be made under which syndicates are formed. Surely it is for us as members of this House of Commons to say what shall be an association under the terms of this act. We will be prohibited from doing so if the legislation in its present form is passed. In confirmation of that statement I refer all hon. members, through you, Mr. Speaker, to what the parliamentary secretary said as reported in *Hansard* at page 8280. That hon. gentleman said this:

There will be authority in the bill to define farm machinery by regulation. We thought it best to do it in this way because we are entering into a completely new venture in which we will have to profit by experience—

The Minister of Agriculture repeated that fact today. I submit that if we permit power of this kind to pass from the hands of this legislating body to the hands of an executive body we may well be guilty of some of those deficits which have been ascribed to us and our functions in recent months. This situation goes to the very root of our duties as legislators. In this legislation, I submit it is for us to decide these important factors, rather than the executive.

The parliamentary secretary on September 21 then stated:

The intention however would be to define farm machinery very broadly, so that the bill might apply to any item of machinery which a farmer might use in the development or operation of his farm, and leave it to the groups as they are organized to decide the items which they feel could profitably be owned and used jointly.

Therefore the circumstances in respect of the establishment of these syndicates will be circumstances in a form satisfactory to the executive, but not necessarily to this house.

The parliamentary secretary then said:

Further, in the setting up of the syndicate there will be predetermined arrangements designed to settle in advance some of the problems which may later arise. There will first be some general provisions applicable to all syndicates, including such items as provisions for adding members, for reduction in membership, for the procedure in the event of death or insolvency of a member, and for the voluntary dissolution of the syndicate. There will also be provisions for such items as the appointment of a secretary, the maintenance of proper books of account, and so on.

The hon. member who seconded the motion which is now before the house made a very valuable contribution when he pointed out that this bill ventures directly into the realm of provincial jurisdiction. The provinces have legislation which defines co-operative associations, and sets out how they shall function and what their governing by-laws shall be. This legislation represents, if

[Mr. Baldwin.]

not a legal usurpation of the rights of the provinces, certainly a factual invasion of their proper prerogatives. That fact was properly pointed out by the hon. member, and I lend my support.

The parliamentary secretary then went on to state:

Farmers forming syndicates will also be required to make arrangements in advance concerning their individual shares and responsibilities with respect to payment of capital maintenance and operating costs, and the responsibilities for operation, repair, maintenance and storage of the machines. They will need to agree concerning the priority of the right to use the machine in the event that two members wish to use it at the same time.

Those are the things which are to be determined by the executive, as this bill is presently worded. I submit with all the strength I can, Mr. Speaker, that these are matters which should be inserted and detailed in the legislation, which should then be brought before the agriculture committee and upon which farm groups in this country should have an opportunity of expressing their views.

Finally, before I leave the speech by the parliamentary secretary, I would point out that I think the minister was quite right in indicating that he does not expect too much from this legislation at the start. He suggests that this was based on legislation introduced in the United Kingdom. The figures which were given by the parliamentary secretary are most illuminating. Legislation of this kind was introduced, sir, in 1955 but developed slowly during the first few years. By 1962, only 293 syndicates had been formed. However, as a result of the program's successful operation it expanded more rapidly and since that time, in 1963, there were 341 syndicates and by August, 596 syndicates. After eight years of operation only 596 syndicates had been established. I suggest to the minister he should be most moderate in the claims he makes for this legislation if, in fact, it is based on the British system. This does not necessarily mean it cannot be of some value. I think we all accept the fact there must be a continual attack on all fronts of this agricultural problem. There is no one, simple, magical cure. Certainly, legislation of this kind by itself must be accepted in context as being narrow and not of too much value.

Before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I indicated I proposed to move an amendment. I do make this final suggestion, particularly with regard to legislation of this kind, that when the government seeks to introduce and have passed legislation containing regulatory powers of this kind, the onus