

with a small region or regions. In that case we could expect active representation by the producers.

We should never lose sight of the fact that when we are dealing with agriculture we are not dealing strictly with the primary producer. We are dealing with all the marketing facilities that must be taken into consideration; and when we discuss food we must never forget that other segment of Canada's population that is so important in this context, the consumer segment. We must see to it that the consumer has something to say about the way these proposals will control and distribute food in Canada.

One of the things we were very upset about in connection with the previous bill was that it did not seem to put any direct power in the hands of primary producers in making decisions as to whether there should be agencies set up dealing with the product with which they were concerned. But when listening to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) I gathered the impression that he was prepared to consider ways and means by which it could be ascertained whether or not a major portion of the primary producers concerned did require an agency, and a determination on how the agency should be set up.

The minister also indicated that his department had been working very seriously to incorporate appeal procedures in the bill, through which any primary producer, or group of producers, could appeal against any regulation made by an agency which seemed to be working a deliberate hardship on that producer or group of producers. This will meet a major objection of producers. Although such a procedure may have existed in the original bill, it was so skilfully hidden by legal verbiage that the ordinary producer was not convinced that he had recourse to appeal. This part of the bill will require intensive examination. If it shows that an appeal can be taken against direct government action, the bill will have less difficulty before the committee.

In my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, I said I was not optimistic that this bill will provide everything that the primary producers and the agricultural industry in general feel they need, because in the main one of the basic purposes of the bill is supply management. I think this is necessary. I think the bill was introduced to try and obtain a better and more regular price for goods and services provided by the agricultural industry.

Mr. Olson: That is right.

Mr. Danforth: This seems to be the entire basis of the bill. In order to do this it will be necessary, and it has been proven necessary in the Wheat Board and the National Dairy Commission—the forerunners of this council—to introduce supply management. But here again, Mr. Speaker, grave doubts arise. In order to introduce supply management successfully in respect of a primary product in Canada, it is only natural and logical to believe that the agency or farm council will direct its attention to a forecast of domestic consumption and normal international trade and consider this a goal for total production. This is a prime objective. It would indeed be Utopia, because then we could allocate produc-

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tion on a quota system, although there could be tremendous problems in trying to allocate quotas interprovincially. But once we knew the amount necessary for domestic consumption and the international export picture, the government would know what could be allocated to the provinces.

The thing that could upset this principle is the fact that we have no indication of any power in the bill to control imports. I am well aware, Mr. Speaker, that there are powers in other bills and in other sections of government management with regard to the control of imports. However, experience has shown it to be very difficult indeed to create an impediment to the flow into this country of imports of food, because immediately you come into direct conflict with consumer hopes. This is because you may be creating a managed market and a price fixing market, and because nations which trade with Canada and buy Canadian products normally take a very dim view if there is any curtailment imposed upon the products they ship into Canada.

● (9:40 p.m.)

We are very vulnerable in this country, Mr. Speaker, because even with our major resources for production we import anywhere from \$800 million to \$1 billion worth of food. To curtail this importation would be extremely difficult because then we would be running contrary to the GATT agreements and to what might be considered the best interests of the consumers of this country. Nowhere in this bill is there an indication of implicit power in an agency, council or even in the minister himself, to control imports. This is a major weakness. If you cannot control imports, it renders almost valueless attempted supply management, and when you do not have supply management you must wonder how much can be accomplished under the terms and provisions of this act. I see this as one of the basic weaknesses.

The second basic weakness is the fact that one should have supply management, and once you have an indication of the total supply that would normally be necessary in Canada you come up against the very difficult problem of allocating quotas either provincially or regionally. It is all very well for the minister to state that this can be done by arbitration and agreement among provinces or regions, but there are other extenuating circumstances which enter into the picture which make such agreement almost impossible.

Province "X", if I may use that designation, having been delinquent in the production of a certain product over the years has through economic necessity found that it must do something about it and has in the past poured tremendous sums of provincial money into the production of that commodity. These are the very products we can be in trouble with today, Mr. Speaker, and there is no indication that such a province or the representative of such a province would easily or voluntarily accept restriction in the production of the commodity in the face of their efforts to increase it. Therefore, it seems very difficult to appreciate that any progress whatsoever could be made. This is another of the weaknesses of the bill.