

As a result of listening to debates in this house from time to time I have come to the conclusion that some of us have not kept up with the times, and this is my reason for referring now to the remarks made by the senator from De Salaberry. He said that Canada is marching on, and I feel that possibly some of the older members in this chamber have not kept pace with Canada; possibly some of us have held too strongly to the old school of thought and have not kept up with changing conditions. Canada is marching on and we have to keep up with the changing times; we have to deal with new conditions as they arise.

I feel that this is a very important bill. Those of us who are close to agriculture—I myself happen to be in the dairy business—know that the dairy business at least is at present in a very serious state. We read all the time of farmers in various parts of the country going out of the dairy business because they no longer are able to make a living in it. That kind of thing has been going on so long that it has become really serious. After all, a farmer is not going to continue producing anything year after year if it is unprofitable.

As Canada develops and goes ahead we cannot always obtain guidance by looking back to the old days when we were boys. What we did then is not necessarily what should be done today. Sometimes we hear people say that they are Liberals of the old school. Well, I think that Liberals too are changing, in keeping with the spirit of the times.

Hon. Mr. Crerar: May I ask my honourable friend a question? Does he consider that the Socialists were right fifteen or twenty years ago when they were advocating state trading?

Hon. Mr. Vaillancourt: Conditions were not the same twenty years ago as they are today.

Hon. Mr. Farquhar: I am sorry, I did not hear the question.

Hon. Mr. Crerar: Does my honourable friend think now that the Socialists and the C.C.F. were right twenty years ago when they advocated state trading?

Hon. Mr. Farquhar: I do not claim that the Socialists were right at that time, or that they are right today. Nevertheless, I think we have to admit that Liberals have adopted many principles that Socialists were advocating years ago. Today, we who call ourselves Liberals are supporting some of the planks that Socialists used to have in their platform.

Hon. Jacob Nicol: Honourable senators, if this is not a socialistic measure—and my colleague from Kennebec (Hon. Mr. Vaillancourt), says it is not—then I do not know what a socialistic measure is. The bill will put a large part of the trade of this country into the hands of bureaucrats. So far as I am concerned, I have had enough to do with bureaucrats. I am willing to work, to carry on my affairs in the best way I can, but I am getting tired of receiving orders from bureaucrats who do not know any more about things than we do ourselves, and yet tell us how we should proceed.

My colleague from Kennebec says that conditions have changed a good deal in the last twenty years, that the world has moved forward, and that Canada must pass a measure like this in order to make it possible for our country to carry on. If that is so, then Canada has become socialistic.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Nicol: I think that private enterprise has carried on in Canada satisfactorily. Then why should this board be given power to trade in all kinds of agricultural products from one end of the country to the other? As my honourable friend from Kennebec knows, co-operatives have been formed in the province of Quebec for trading in certain merchandise, and they have operated well. What will happen now to co-operatives trading in honey, for instance? Will this board be able to notify them that it considers the decisions they have taken are unwise, and that it will tell them what to do? I am opposed to the measure and intend to vote against it.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, if there are no further speakers I wish to refer to some of the arguments advanced in this debate.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, if the honourable the leader (Hon. Mr. Robertson) speaks now he will close the debate.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: I do not see why honourable senators should be greatly surprised to see a bill like this brought in. Some years ago the fixing of a minimum price for agricultural products was, rightly or wrongly, adopted as a policy of this country, and it followed that sooner or later if circumstances so required, there would have to be some legislative provisions for carrying that policy into effect. As was said by the honourable senators from Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Lambert) and Churchill (Hon. Mr. Crerar), the agricultural interest of this country constituted for a long period our really private enterprise. Year in and year out they had to be prepared