

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

• (5:00 a.m.)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, once again, on this night which is the last in 1971 and during which I feel all the hon. members worked eagerly, I thank you for having allowed me to deal with Bill C-176 entitled "An Act to establish the National Farm Products Marketing Council and to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products".

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-197 was discussed—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would invite the hon. members to allow the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beaudoin) to continue his speech.

Mr. Beaudoin: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-197 was debated and given the six months' hoist. The government then introduced Bill C-176 which is an exact copy of Bill C-197.

Having the honour of being a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, I can assure the House that we had all sorts of experiences: endless discussions, trips throughout Canada, never-ending sittings, speeches and briefs, some interesting, others much less so. I even went to Washington with some of my colleagues for a week of study, in order to meet American officials or the Under-secretary of Agriculture.

I am convinced that we have met the representatives of over a hundred organizations of farm producers in Canada. For two years, they explained to us personally what they thought of the bill. We have received as many if not more briefs written by individuals or organizations which could not appear before the Committee on Agriculture.

So much has been said that I think that we have discussed for at least 10 full minutes each important word appearing in some 25 pages of the bill on marketing of farm products.

My good friend the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) and many others have moved dozens of amendments which, for the most part, were acceptable.

To my knowledge, the government accepted at least 32 amendments and refused the others.

For my part, whether in committee of the whole or at the Standing Committee on Agriculture, I believe that I have pointed out to my colleagues all aspects of the bill that seemed suspect to me or at least difficult to apply.

• (5:10 a.m.)

In my opinion, this bill ought to provide a control of imports, if we really wish to help the agricultural class, because Bill C-176 does not provide the National Council and marketing agencies with the required tools to regulate imported products in the same way as Canadian production.

If we want this legislation to be efficient, I think we must take into account the agricultural production of our neighbours, as well as their future import and export problems. Canadian producers' associations will have to attempt to enable their members to supply a product of

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel).]

similar or, if possible, better quality. They will have to produce at competitive prices and perhaps at cost prices lower than those of their competitors, namely American producers or those from any other friendly country, whether they import our commodities or export theirs to Canada.

During the study week on agriculture, which I had the honour to attend with some colleagues in Washington, between November 28 and December 5, 1971, we heard several lecturers, all of whom were American civil servants and real experts in that field. One of them, who submitted a brief, I now remember: he was Mr. Ioanes, Under-Secretary of Agriculture in the United States. Mr. Ioanes had just returned from a trip around the world and was talking about his forecasts in the agricultural field. He told us, in reply to one of my questions, that Canadian beef would sell at a good price as long as the United States would import beef and veal from Canada, but that it was always possible that the United States would reduce the volume and value of Canadian imports, because that country was already supporting American producers through all kinds of subsidies totalling \$3.5 billion a year. He added that it would not be fair to make too much competition to American producers by importing too many similar farm products in Canada.

Mr. Ioanes also said that in future American producers would arrange to have cattle ready for slaughtering at an earlier age. So the only horned beasts of two years and a half and over in the fattening stations will be breeding cows, which will mean a higher productive capacity.

In the United States, there are now in Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Colorado, California and Mississippi alone about 152,000 fattening stations. Almost all have been built since 1960. But the under secretary for Agriculture foresees that beef production will increase by at least 5 per cent in 1972 and that the rise will continue in the future.

Mr. Speaker, in the United States this year, 75 per cent of slaughtered calves came from those fattening stations. A very high percentage of beef producers are landless and I believe the same situation will prevail in Canada by the 80's.

Canadian producers will be increasingly specialized and, like those in the United States, will produce ever larger quantities and consistently improved quality products. It is therefore essential that Bill C-176 provide free movement of all agricultural products between Canadian provinces: feed grains as well as beef, veal, hogs, poultry, eggs, etc. so that production costs are practically the same throughout Canada.

Mr. Ioanes has told us that the Federation of American Agricultural Co-operatives has called on the U.S. government to pass legislation on the marketing of farm products as early as possible, including control of imports and exports. I consider that in view of their climate, which permits large grain crops and their immense production capacity in all fields of agriculture, Bill C-176 should also include provisions whereby imported farm products are also subject to quantity and quality controls by the National Council and the marketing agencies to be created.