

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

al law that is rather clear, namely, that the United States government has a responsibility in a matter like this, and that Canada could prevent the shipment in this area of a dangerous substance?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that that is a correct interpretation of international law. I think the United States has a responsibility, which it is discharging, to consult with us about precautions. However, the nerve gas will not be moving through our waters but moving entirely through United States territorial waters.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I apologize to the hon. member but the Chair went beyond the question period to allow the hon. member for Fundy-Royal a supplementary. Perhaps the subject might be pursued tomorrow.

• (3:00 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

FARM PRODUCTS MARKETING AGENCIES BILL

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL MARKETING COUNCIL AND AGENCIES

The House resumed from Tuesday, May 5, consideration of the motion of Mr. Olson that Bill C-197, to establish the National Farm Products Marketing Council and to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, at ten o'clock last evening I had been pointing out to the government the necessity for taking effective action to ensure that legislation such as that now before us is going to be of value to the farmers of this country. I had also pointed out the necessity for making appropriate use of the legislation. In this regard I made reference to legislation already on the statute books of Canada, namely the Canadian Wheat Board Act, which establishes an agency for the orderly marketing of a specific number of grain products.

I had also pointed out that the government had placed the entire principle of orderly marketing and the operations of the Canadian Wheat Board in jeopardy by the manner in which it had made use of this legislation

[Mr. Fairweather.]

through the program that we now know as operation LIFT. I suggested that this represented a complete distortion and perversion of the principle of orderly marketing to which the government is at least paying lip service in the legislation that is now before us.

I think it is very difficult to imagine, for instance, a quota system being devised based on acres of land not in production. At least, it was difficult to imagine such a thing until the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang) and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) came forward with the program known as operation Lift. It seems to me that a quota system must be designed to ensure equity of delivery. The new plan is a negation of the entire principle of orderly marketing, and it has been suggested that it could undermine orderly marketing plans. If this sort of technique is used, or if this principle is applied to other marketing plans that may be evolved as a result of the passage of Bill C-197, then it seems to me there is an inherent danger. I also think that when marketing plans of the sort envisaged by Bill C-197 are developed, the area of public responsibility will grow, and this is something that must be noted by the government.

For example, we have had established marketing machinery for wheat for years, but the implication of certain government policies is that changes will be made. The International Grains Arrangement will be brought within the ambit of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades. The arrangements made as a result of the Kennedy round negotiations have been very ineffective. In addition, the government allowed an 11-month period to elapse after the expiry of the old international wheat agreement before the new International Grains Arrangement was put into effect. Concessions were traded away in the over-all negotiations. The government would not take action when action was needed, and needed urgently, and as a result the farmers have been left holding the bag.

We now have no support for farm prices in spite of the fact that the International Grains Arrangement was signed by Canada as a nation and not by the farmers or by the Canadian Wheat Board. Further, this week we had the meeting to which reference was made during the question period, and it has demonstrated the fact that if governments are unwilling to take or incapable of taking action, the best marketing plans and schemes will be of no real value and cannot possibly be effective.