

The best example of this is the recent case in Prince Edward Island—I think I have my figures correct—where a year or so ago the production of potatoes increased over the previous year by some 5 per cent. This resulted in a decline in income for the potato growers of some 50 per cent.

It amazes me, as a person from the province of Ontario representing an agricultural constituency, to hear members like the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) not so much attack the bill—because I suppose it is to be expected that the opposition would oppose and criticize—but to hear him saying, in essence, that he is against orderly marketing per se and in toto.

This is an argument with which I heartily disagree. I venture to say that certainly Ontario members of his party, such as the hon. member for Kent-Essex (Mr. Danforth), who is held in high regard in this House, must surely disagree with the hon. member for Vegreville. I know that the hon. member for Huron (Mr. McKinley) and others must surely reject categorically this kind of ridiculous conclusion that somehow orderly marketing is going to hurt the farmers. It is disorder in marketing that hurts the farmers, not order.

Marketing which was not orderly, or was somehow organized so that the farmers themselves did not control it, would be something we ought to reject. I would be the first to reject it. That is why in Bill C-176 we have bent over backwards with respect to representation, particularly with respect to the Marketing council that is to be established. I point out that the council's role is to look into the situation as it pertains to any particular commodity and then to recommend to the minister whether or not a marketing agency should be established for that product.

The bill has already been amended in such a way that either the chairman or vice-chairman of the council must be a farmer, and at least 50 per cent of all members of the council must be farmers. Why did we insist on that? We insisted on that to be absolutely sure that no group of bureaucrats, or persons who were somehow removed from the agricultural industry, could in fact direct that industry.

Having done that we went even further to assure that, when the council looked into a certain commodity and how its situation was at any particular time, the council had to be convinced, first of all, that there was a majority of the producers of the commodity in favour of establishing some kind of an agency to promote or to direct the sale of that commodity before any agency would be established.

In discussing the particular amendment before us now we must also take a careful look at clause 17 of the bill on page 11. In order to appreciate properly clause 2(c), which is directly before us at the moment, we have to remember what is in clause 17, which will, of course, absolutely prevent the kind of horror situation, so well described, but wrongly, by the hon. member for Vegreville. This is what clause 17 says:

The Governor in Council may by proclamation establish an agency—

That is, establish an agency after the council decides that this would be a good thing.

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

—with powers relating to any farm product or farm products the marketing of which in interprovincial and export trade is not regulated pursuant to the Canadian Wheat Board Act—

The hon. member for Timiskaming might take note.

—or the Canadian Dairy Commission Act—

Mark these words, Mr. Speaker.

—where he is satisfied that a majority of the producers of the farm product—

Where are all these horrors and bogeymen hiding in the cupboards and closets, to whom the hon. member for Vegreville referred?

Mr. Horner: Keep on reading.

Mr. McBride: I will.

—or of each of the farm products in Canada is in favour of the establishment of an agency.

Mr. Horner: Keep on reading.

Mr. McBride: I will keep on reading because this will reassure some of the beef producers who have been misled by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association into being stampeded by this bill. Clause 17(2) reads:

The Governor in Council, in order to determine whether a majority of producers of a farm product are in favour of establishing an agency, may—

Mr. Horner: That is the key word. Change "may" to "shall" and we will go along with it.

Mr. McBride:

—may request that each Province carry out a plebiscite of the said producers.

This is because it is a provincial responsibility, something which even members like the hon. member for Crowfoot ought to know. When he starts hollering and pretending that he is representing the interests of the agricultural community I think he ought to know that many of these responsibilities come under provincial jurisdiction; and if he does not know—

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. The hon. member imputes some suggestion that I ought to know something, or is suggesting that I may have misrepresented certain things. He may not know that this very clause to which he is referring was moved by myself in committee, but I do think it would be far more meaningful if the word "may" were changed to "shall".

● (5:00 p.m.)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. The hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton.

Mr. McBride: Mr. Speaker, we are used to the hon. member for Crowfoot. Over the months, as a matter of fact for over two years in the agricultural committee, we heard him throw his tantrums that were supposed to impress the press and show that he alone had the best interests of Canadian agriculture at heart. I submit that if anybody looked at the amendments he moved and at the position he took in committee, a position which is similar to the one he is pursuing today, one would recognize that the fear motivating the hon. member is the fear that, somehow, the agricultural industry might become