

*Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill*

The hon. member for Essex said, quite correctly, that all the members of the Ontario marketing boards were democratically elected. This is wonderful. But did he remind us that under the terms of Bill C-176, especially as first presented, the members of the national marketing council were not to be elected and would not necessarily be producers; they were to be appointed by Order in Council? It is strange he did not mention this.

In the course of the debate yesterday I heard the bill before us compared with the Wheat Board legislation. But since when was supply management provided for under the Canadian Wheat Board Act? Since when did the Wheat Board tell growers to limit production to a certain number of acres? The Dairy Commissioner has also been referred to on a number of occasions, not by government supporters, it is true. But here we really see a quota system in operation, quotas which have become rigorous and costly. It is true the commission has coped with surplus production and that as a result we are now importing butter. In fact, a lot of the small producers are out of business. I wonder what these small producers have in their thoughts this Christmas season when they hear about supply management. The Dairy Commission has not been very successful in finding markets abroad. It has been extremely successful in limiting production, there is no doubt about that.

The price of hogs has often been mentioned. I am sure the low price is blamed on the lack of supply management. That is a laugh. The blame lies with a government which advised farmers to diversify—to grow less wheat, to plant more barley and to get into hog production. Hog production can be started in a hurry. Overproduction and starvation prices have been the result. I do not think anyone can deny that the type of legislation before us will hasten the decline in the number of farms.

In Europe, and no doubt in many other parts of the world, the number of farms is decreasing at an alarming rate. Has anyone ever stopped to think that perhaps we in this country might do well to increase the numbers of our farmers, or at least to allow good young men to take over some of the present operations? It seems that all legislation nowadays is designed to hasten the decrease in the number of farmers, though in the very near future both Canada and the world could well be faced with serious food shortages. This legislation must be amended or we shall find there is a closed shop in agriculture. You can farm if you have the money, but if you do not have money then no amount of knowledge, ability or experience will enable you to become established.

Supply can be controlled on the basis of legislation of the type before us. Shortages will result and imports will take up the slack; other countries more farsighted than we have been will be happy to supply us at a price. And there is no mention, in this legislation, of dealing with imports in any way. Supply management will be costly. It will control, and thereby reduce, production. It will further reduce the number of farms. I am not yet convinced that it will in any way increase the net income of farmers. It does not attempt to deal with the real difficulty, that of combating ever-increasing production costs, lower returns and the lessening of our ability to compete in world markets.

There is another factor which has not been mentioned so far, though I am sure it will be dealt with, at least by some of my hon. friends. It is this: an increase in the cost of agricultural products will be inevitable, and everyone in this country is a consumer. I think we should be concerned about the effects on consumers of increased costs of foodstuffs.

Speaking of displaced farmers, I think the question should be asked: Where do displaced farmers go when they have lost their farms? No doubt most of them go to already overcrowded cities where, because of circumstances, they probably end up on welfare, thereby aggravating an already serious social problem. Incidentally, yesterday when the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. McBride) referred, as reported in *Hansard* at page 10783, to "a certain clause in the bill which we amended," I think he used the word "we" loosely. He wanted the bill passed in committee as it was; I do not believe he would deny this. He was talking at the time to my hon. friend from Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), the member who had moved the amendment to which he had referred in the first place, so I think he should have said "you" rather than "we". He was a little confused in his use of personal pronouns.

In conclusion, I believe the record should be set straight. The cattlemen of Canada have made it clear they do not want this type of legislation. Many representatives of other commodity groups have also found the bill unacceptable in the absence of many amendments. It is about time the government listened to these people for a change.

**Mr. James Hugh Faulkner (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, I do not enter this debate as an expert on agriculture. Many hon. members who have already spoken from both sides of the House know the industry far better than I do, but I do have a large number of farmers in my constituency—about 25 per cent of my constituency is engaged in agriculture. I have had ample time in which to read the bill and, what is more, I have had time in which to discuss it with the farm groups in my area.

The purpose of my intervention is to place before the House conclusions reached as a result of these talks with people in the constituency of Peterborough. It is very difficult for me, a layman not engaged actively in the agricultural industry, to know where the truth lies. We have heard members of this House claiming to be spokesmen for agricultural groups and presenting the opinions of those they say they represent.

• (5:20 p.m.)

It was abundantly clear from the spectacle in the House that there is no consensus. On one side of the House a member representing a western constituency opposes the bill, saying he is speaking on behalf of the farmers of his area. That speech may be followed by that of a member, also from the west, claiming to support the bill. The same thing applies to Quebec. The hon. member for Compton (Mr. Latulippe) has said that the farmers of Quebec do not support the bill, and then the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Cadieu) claimed that the Quebec farmers were attempting to foist it on the western farmers. The hon. member for Frontenac in his excellent speech said that