

*Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill*

going to vote against the bill. I still fail to understand how one can make such statements. In the name of freedom, it seems to me that it has been proved for a long time already that this legislation guaranteed this freedom to this group of producers.

Furthermore, some suggest that the legislation could be helpful to trusts. In my view, nothing more than these marketing agencies can bring such trusts to heel. There is always the fear that some small producers will disappear. In fact, some take pleasure in saying, again and again, that, in the last ten years, thousands of farmers have gone out of business, and one sees also that trusts have been established, because of the lack of marketing agencies, as a result of which production has not been well-planned, while this legislation appears to ensure the opposite.

So, it is difficult to understand the arguments put forward by some hon. members who are determined not to see the good effects of this legislation. Surely they could see how the legislation works.

Yet, it is clear that changes were necessary and the government has decided to bring them in.

I was, like many others, quite impressed by the comments of the hon. member for Kent-Essex (Mr. Danforth). I think that he has been able, as usual, to express his opinion quite judiciously and I was left with a good impression. Besides, I know that he is competent enough to give valuable advice to hon. members.

I would also like to deal with imports which apparently have been a problem for quite a while. It is clear that the government has the responsibility, especially at certain times of the year, to put a limit on imports. But we will have legislation based on marketing agencies as a National Council to administer these agencies. It appears to me that this legislation is more valuable than all the agencies we have known to restrict imports which at certain times of the year are quite a problem.

That fear and those imports that are too often responsible for the difficulties of several categories of producers should gradually disappear as a result of the establishment of a national council, and of a provincial agency well structured by a national policy.

I should like also to recognize that the bill seems to ensure there will be no infringement on provincial jurisdictions, contrary to some opinions that have been expressed in the House. It seems quite clear that the provinces will have the opportunity to sit at the same table. They will have the responsibility of distributing production.

Earlier I heard an hon. member from Newfoundland say that this province produced more eggs than it consumed. I am sure that the provinces will get together and accept to some extent that Newfoundland be allowed to keep on distributing its surplus in other provinces, the same as Quebec and Ontario presently have the possibility of exporting their surpluses to other provinces.

In view of the past experience of Quebec and Ontario, where it was realized there were difficulties, it seems those marketing agencies headed by a national Council should bring us some security and make us more optimistic than some have shown to be to this day.

Of course there must be agreement to ensure that negotiations between provinces and good faith of all those involved will always be necessary.

[Mr. La Salle.]

It is inconceivable that the government will have settled everything through this legislation. Our farmers will always have to show some creativity and good faith and I believe that such good faith to all intents and purposes will bring about fruitful negotiations beneficial to the whole country.

Nor do I admit, as was suggested yesterday, that up to a certain point the province of Quebec sought to impose its demands. It is stupid to claim such a thing and as a representative of the province of Quebec, I, along with members from other provinces indeed have long dreamt of nation-wide negotiations for the purpose of more equitable distribution in the interest of all producers.

Do I need to repeat that this legislation becomes a tool, a service to producers who, in all freedom, will be able to use it properly.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that changes and progress demand a minimum of efficiency. We are preoccupied with the disappearance of a number of small producers. I think it is equally important for the government to do all it possibly can in order to ensure the continuity of family farms.

I think that those marketing boards will allow for the continuity of family farms, for, as well as providing a livelihood for family heads, they may encourage a farmer's son to go on living on a farm, as it has been clear for too long that the reason our farmers' children chose not to follow on their fathers' steps was that they knew the problems which their fathers were faced with—and the proposed legislation is certainly going to increase the chance of safeguarding family farms.

We must not think that it is going to protect all small producers. I think that progress demands a degree of efficiency. Whether we like it or not, I think that progress is a natural phenomenon which cannot be escaped. There again, the establishment of those marketing boards will allow a grouping of a number of middle producers to survive and to stand up to those monopolies or cartels against which they are at present completely helpless.

• (2:20 a.m.)

There was some talk about an amendment aimed at establishing a reasonable price. It is of course desirable that, inasmuch as possible, the government be able to establish reasonable prices which would generate hope and enable farmers to meet their commitments.

I was saying that the farmer should be more creative than ever and the government and provincial authorities should be more open minded and more understanding than ever in regard to the implementation of such a bill. Negotiations will not be reduced and large organizations will have to multiply if we were to seriously establish these marketing agencies.

I shall ask leave, Mr. Speaker, and express once again the confidence I place in hon. members who have participated in this debate. The effects of such a legislation will anyway equal the honesty displayed by all members and by those who will be entrusted with the management of this National Council and who will endeavour to meet the provincial authorities and various organizations in order to establish offices for each commodity.