

*Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill*

that the members of this agency will be qualified and will really represent every farming group in Canada?

As members of the House, I think it is our duty to require the minister and Parliament to amend this bill in order to ensure the full representation of the various farming associations.

Mr. Speaker, I do not question the good faith of the minister introducing the bill, but is it enough to rely on the good faith of the minister when he might very well happen some day to change his mind?

As for us, we want to be assured that a number of members of this agency, which will have great responsibilities as indicated by the clauses of the bill, will be chosen among the farmers.

I think that the farmers are entitled to that representation so as to ensure that the necessary talents can advise the agency. When the government will realize the significance of that representation, we may expect certain changes to be made during consideration of the bill in committee, so as to ensure the producers of an adequate representation.

It will be pointed out to me that the bill under consideration does not prevent such appointments. I realize the significance—as I said earlier—of the marketing of farm products and I would not want, at some time, to be accused of merely delaying the passage of this legislation.

I believe that it is our duty to require that representation if necessary. By simply relying on this bill, which lacks precision and guarantees, I think that we would be remiss in our duty.

We require these particulars in the best interests of the agricultural community.

My remarks are not intended to delay the passage of this measure. On the contrary, we recognize its merits and we agree with its basic principle.

In view of the importance of this bill, we must admit that the government is taking over complete jurisdiction over agriculture. Recognizing also the importance of agriculture in Canada as well as the difficulties it is facing, it is also obvious that such legislation has to be passed in order to improve the lot of the farmers.

This bill which contains provisions on the official recognition of the farmer, the selection of lands appropriate for certain types of crops and the control of the general production, constitutes the outline of a management

[Mr. La Salle.]

policy. I am not saying that it is not necessary today for the government to help in matters of production of these products. As several associations have requested it for a long time, we are asking for the establishment of a Commission or agency that will determine the kind of production most profitable to agriculture and to producers.

However, I wonder why the government would turn down the suggestion that the House give assurances that producers will be represented on the Council or the agency. Why should it refuse? I see no reason for the government continuing to refuse giving us the assurance of such a representation which I consider is necessary in order to maintain better control, at the same time depriving itself of the required information. I repeat that I do not believe these arguments are worthy of discussion in the House.

I prefer to credit hon. members with good faith and believe that the failure to recognize the value of farmer representatives within the council is perhaps an omission. Such participation would be a real enrichment.

The problems are many concerning milk, wheat, vegetables and imports in general, and at times they create great difficulties for our Canadian producers. The council will, I believe, have all the powers required for limitation of imports in certain cases. Thus, production of milk, wheat, or vegetables will become more regular and better directed to the advantage of the Canadian producers.

We all want agriculture to be prosperous. Because of the interest I have for the producers of my riding and for the Canadian producers in general and with the co-operation of all hon. members, I hope that the representatives of the various farm associations of Canada will be allowed to sit on this Council. The government will understand that these suggestions from the opposition are not against the principle of this bill and do not aim at questioning the goodwill of the minister responsible for this bill. On the contrary, we wanted to participate in the drawing up of the bill so that producers may be given the place they are entitled to since they are directly involved.

I imagine that an impartial government would not hesitate to recognize the value of such representation which cannot but help farming and which can also give our producers a sufficient income if it is well thought out.

I shall close my remarks by wishing that all hon. members will understand how important