

*Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill*

ization of an industry by way of supply management historically leads to misallocation of resources and further inefficiencies, ultimately resulting in lower prices for the farmer for farm produce and higher prices for the consumer. For the small farmer this is a double cut. He gets less for his product but must pay more for his own food.

Of course, the general direction which this government is taking is to remove small producers. This bill provides statutory power to further this kind of adjustment. In other words, it would remove some 200,000 farmers from agriculture. I think we must look to other kinds of solutions to the problem of decreasing farm income. We must look to development rather than to removal from the industry of masses of people and masses of small farms. The effect of this bill would be the greater and greater shrinkage of Canada's agricultural population. I say this would be unproductive and inhumane. Economically, it is retrograde.

In addition, it is certainly impossible to say that Bill C-176 is an anti-poverty weapon. The concept of this bill originally was to control marketing of chickens and eggs. Perhaps that is all it should do. Certainly other producers, particularly cattlemen, have persistently indicated that they want no part of this kind of program since this bill could create a small class of privileged farmers by sacrificing the smaller producer and the young people of rural Canada. It differs from provincial marketing legislation because provincial marketing legislation does not have the dangerous powers which would be given to agencies under this bill.

For these reasons and many others, Mr. Speaker, we must conclude that the bill as it now stands is not in the best interests of the agricultural industry and that these amendments, namely, amendments Nos. 1, 5 and 22 would go a long way toward improving the bill. It has been said that there has been agreement by the provinces that only chickens and eggs should be included. There are dangers in that as well, the same dangers I have already discussed. Chicken and egg production in certain provinces is in the hands of very few individuals. It is natural that these few individuals would want to keep out all other producers and potential producers. That, I think, at best could be described as a selfish interest. However, I would probably be willing to go along with it if other amendments put forward by our party were accepted.

As has been mentioned before, this bill through the formation of marketing boards would restrict free trade of farm products. This poses a danger for the Atlantic and prairie regions. The potential for future and continued prosperity of these have-not areas is absolutely dependent upon their being permitted free and unrestricted access to all markets in Canada as well as outside Canada. With free trade of farm products, efficient production of farm products is assured. Without extensive markets a rationalization of Canadian agriculture is impossible.

The provincial markets of the Prairie and Atlantic provinces can never be large enough to supply the demand necessary to absorb the increased farm output which would result if agriculture were revitalized. Unless farm output is rationalized and unless free access to markets is guaranteed, the income-generating potential of rural Canada will be severely curtailed. With the curtailment of

this vital source of growth, the have-not regions of Canada will become more unequal participants in confederation. The very essence of confederation was to guarantee free access to the entire domestic market no matter where the particular product was produced. The effect of the marketing boards will be to protect local producers from outside-the-province competition. Such protection can only be damaging since it forces retaliation by other provinces.

• (5:50 p.m.)

The result of this balkanization is the complete disintegration of the Canadian economy. Under the guise of efficiency, the Canadian government will strip certain areas of a strong agricultural sector. It will require other areas to attempt to be self-sufficient in respect of farm products. Such an attempt can only lead to higher prices for consumers, inefficient use of resources by the agricultural sector and reduced income for all but a few big farms. Every farming organization and every friend of the farmer should resist the passage of this bill in its present form. If passed, Bill C-176 will mean the end of a dynamic rural community and possibly the end of confederation as we know it today.

I conclude by saying that I think many of the comments made by the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. McBride) are complete nonsense. He tried to imply that this bill would help small producers and small farmers. I have had a close look at the bill as well as at the many briefs which were presented and I fail to see any facts to substantiate the comments made by the hon. member.

**Mr. Mahoney:** You don't know anything about it.

**Mr. Yewchuk:** The hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Mahoney) wants to make it known that he has come back after the recess. We acknowledge that. He agrees that he does not know anything about it. I agree with him on that.

I urge every member of this House to take a serious look at the three amendments before us. If agreed to, they would improve the bill and make it more acceptable to the producers who, after all, are the ones about whom we are most concerned. I think the amendments would create a situation where the government would be in a better position to serve the people, rather than the reverse where the people serve the government.

**Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley):** Mr. Speaker, it is said that this is the kind of world where you have to run as fast as you can to stay where you are. The hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. McBride) referred to farmers being in a world where they have to run as fast as they can to fall backward. The debate on Bill C-176, the farm marketing legislation, has some Alice in Wonderland qualities about it so I do not think I would be remiss if I quoted from "Alice in Wonderland". If I were a practical politician, a minister of agriculture attempting to put through the House of Commons a bill having to do with chickens and eggs, I would have limited this farm marketing bill to poultry products. Politics is the art of the possible, but for two years we have been trying to solve the impossible.

[Mr. Yewchuk.]