

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

Mr. Danforth: We were assured that all commodity groups had been canvassed and that they supported this measure.

Mr. Faulkner: What are you against now, Harold?

Mr. Danforth: When the cattlemen of this country voiced their objections, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) assured them that if they did not like the measure they would not be included within it. Only a few weeks later, when the committee was conducting its examination, it turned out that the government was not prepared to stand behind its own assurances. That is when we began to lose faith in the assurances of the government and that is when the government lost even more credibility.

The government brought this bill in two years ago. In one of the opening speeches we in the opposition said that this bill was not what it ought to be because there was no provision for producer representation on the agencies. The opposition proposed amendments and now there is producer representation on the agencies.

An hon. Member: Then vote for the bill.

Mr. Danforth: We did not like the supply management aspects of the bill, and you will find that those supply management aspects have been removed from it. In the original bill there was no provision for appeal procedures; appeals were to be diverted to the minister. Now that position has been amended and appeal procedures are available.

Mr. Faulkner: But you still oppose the bill, do you not?

Mr. Danforth: Even more so.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: You want nothing, Harold.

Mr. Faulkner: You are making it worse and worse.

An hon. Member: The Tory party favours the big farmers.

Mr. Danforth: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair finds it difficult to hear the hon. member.

Mr. Danforth: I do not mind the interjections of hon. members opposite. Throughout the history of farming it has been the man without knowledge of agriculture who has tried to tell the producer what to do.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: Men like the hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Faulkner) and the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. McBride).

• (11:40 p.m.)

Mr. Danforth: Every time there has been government intervention in the marketing field, chaos has resulted. The government intervened in the affairs of the sugar beet industry of Ontario with supply management, and we no longer have a sugar beet industry. The government held up the National Dairy Council as a model when it

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introduced this bill. It is the model they asked us to accept. What has happened? So many dairymen have been forced out of business by the operations of the Council that we have moved from a position of over-supply to a position of under-supply.

I cannot support this bill and hon. members opposite are no doubt curious to know why I cannot do so. It is because the entire principle upon which this bill is based is fundamentally wrong. The whole principle of this bill supposes supply management, which means that the government cannot sell the products of agriculture and therefore intends to control production through regulation. Not only that, but in every instance where those responsible for provincial marketing schemes have tried desperately to ensure strong markets the government has allowed products to come in indiscriminately from other countries to take advantage of markets developed by the boards.

Yesterday in the House my hon. friend from Lambton-Kent (Mr. McCutcheon) showed how some of these marketing schemes were not operating to the advantage of farmers generally. He spoke from experience, because here in Ontario we probably have more experience of marketing agencies and schemes than other provinces. We know that marketing control is not the answer to all agricultural problems and that it never will be.

I can understand why some hon. members opposite want this type of bill. I know the hon. member for Essex (Mr. Whelan) well and I respect him. I can understand why he would want it. Everything he produces comes under a marketing agency and a bill like this is perfect for a man in a comfortable pew, because any competition to his production will be stopped by government regulation.

Mr. Faulkner: That is not what Bill Stewart says.

Mr. Danforth: They say this bill will help the little man, but nothing could be further from the truth. In the actual operation of any type of supply management based on quotas the little man cannot survive economically on the quota allotted to him. In the second place, the only man who can buy that quota is a man who is already well established. So the man with the large quota gets greater production and the small man goes into oblivion. Hon. members opposite are building up monopolies by the very legislation they are asking us to pass tonight. It will not help, it will hinder.

An hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. Danforth: Those who say nonsense ought to have sat on marketing boards, as I have. They ought to have direct marketing agencies as I have.

No matter in what form Parliament passes this legislation, it will not and cannot work. It will be impossible to administer, and I will tell the House why. Though the government is asking us to pass legislation which is national in scope, it is not really national. It cannot force the provinces to give up their powers to the central government. Therefore any province can opt out with respect to any commodity, and when this happens that is the end of a national marketing agency.

The second reason the legislation will not work is that the government has not tied into this bill any means of controlling imports. It is all very well to say that imports