

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

enabling legislation, it should be left entirely to the producers of those commodities to decide whether they want to become a party to this marketing plan. It is they who should decide what the marketing plan constitutes, whether it would constitute a program of supply management of simply be for promotion and research. In my opinion this would lay the groundwork for this bill to become permissive or enabling legislation, rather than coercive legislation.

With regard to the free movement of agricultural products across provincial boundaries, I believe section 121 of the BNA Act should be upheld; and I believe it is the duty of the federal government to ensure that the ruling of the Supreme Court is asserted. The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) simply reflects the decision of the Supreme Court. I believe that if we are to have a bill with which we can live it is mandatory that these amendments be incorporated, and I urge that all hon. members lend their support to them.

In conclusion I would like to indicate that there are a number of people in this country who continue to have, more than ever before, serious reservations about this bill. I would like to read a letter which I received on December 20 from Coronado, Alberta from a gentleman by the name of Kenneth Cleven. I believe that he outlines in a nutshell some of the serious reservations that individual farmers across the country have about this bill. He writes:

Recently we hear alarming reports that Bill C-176 is again up for passage, this time reportedly with production control sections for cattle and hogs deleted. However, one can be quite certain that if this government were given another five year mandate these features would later be added.

That is something that I would doubt.

I am quite certain that any freedom loving farmer who has read this bill would be violently opposed to it. It is one step farther down the road to complete federal government control of our lives and they already have too much.

During World War II, as a member of the Canadian infantry I assisted in liberating European farmers from such a system—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Faulkner: Garbage.

Mr. Mazankowski:

—where inspectors would call to see that quotas were being met. Also, I have a brother-in-law from Norway who farmed under the Nazis. They would go to great lengths, at risk of the death penalty, to evade these quotas, such as by concealing an extra cow behind the hay mow in the barn or raising a few extra pigs back in the woods.

Mr. Faulkner: That is nonsense. I am surprised at you.

Mr. Mazankowski: I am surprised at the hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Faulkner). He has simply not read the bill and he does not know what it contains. There are many implications in this bill and I am merely placing this letter on the record. It goes on to read:

One can readily see how difficult production controls would be to enforce in Canada, with our vast spaces and rugged terrain. It would require an army of inspectors, to be paid out of our production, and penalties would have to be severe. Canada would degenerate into a police state as far as farmers are concerned.

This gentleman could be a Liberal.

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

Mr. Faulkner: He is certainly not a Liberal. I dissociate myself from him.

Mr. Mazankowski: The letter goes on to read:

Being a former cream shipper I have had some experience with the Dairy Commission. Rigid, impractical rules and regulations laid down by bureaucrats have greatly increased labour requirements and cost of production and driven many farmers out of the industry.

• (4:50 p.m.)

In that connection, we have only to look at the record of the Canadian Dairy Commission to see what has happened. We have had a wholesale extinction of the smaller operators, those with delivery quotas of less than 420 pounds. Small creamery plants were forced to shut down. Now, because of political expediency, the minister has introduced an amendment to his Canadian Dairy Commission proposal reinstating those people who lost their quotas or who fell below their allotted minimum delivery requirement.

We now see the results of the Dairy Commission and their controls, the wholesale closure of cheese plants because of milk shortage, the breaking of contact between producer and cheese manufacturers (which is necessary for making top quality cheddar cheese) because of pooling arrangements, and now a shortage of butter. I expect to see a far greater shortage. There is some justification for government involvement in the dairy industry, being subsidized, but this is not so of cattle and hogs.

We in the cattle industry now have a very efficient marketing system, the law of supply and demand in North America, accurate market information, and producers making their own intelligent decisions. Cattlemen are almost invariably free enterprisers and any imposition of bureaucratic control between us and the market place would cause a mass exodus of worth-while producers from the industry and would result in beef rationing in Canada within a few years, unless our foreign reserves were large enough to import large quantities—

In closing I would urge you to force the government to withdraw this bill and bring in a new one, mentioning only those producers who have requested it. Of course they may use closure, but the voting public of Canada have shown in the past that they do not look kindly on closure.

Mr. Murray McBride (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, it is a real privilege to speak this afternoon in this debate on Bill C-176, an act to establish the National Farm Products Marketing Council and to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products, and in particular on the amendment to which we are now addressing ourselves concerning the proposal that on page 1 at line 14 the clause should end after the word "agriculture".

As you know, Mr. Speaker, farming in Canada is an industry that is represented by many thousands of small producers, producers who could best be described as small businessmen. Unfortunately, as anyone who is interested in the agricultural industry knows or ought to know, the great tragedy that befalls agriculture in this modern day is that there are thousands of individual producers all producing a single product which must be sold to a very small and limited number of purchasers. This results in the fact, of course, that if there is not some semblance of balance between the amount of product produced and the demand for that product, then the income to the producer is forced to swing in exaggerated patterns, in a boom or bust cycle.