

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

There are other amendments which I feel should have been accepted, for example, amendment No. 23 proposed by the hon. member for Crowfoot which, again, affirms the principle to which I have referred, namely, that the efforts of the council should be designed to pay due regard to promoting the greatest opportunity for the largest number of producers to acquire a standard of living comparable with organized segments of society.

• (3:20 a.m.)

A government which claims to be committed to assisting the small family farm unit, if it were dedicated and seriously committed to that objective would have no objection to accepting an amendment of that nature or the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski), which reads:

—to submit to the minister, at the commencement of each production year, a list of prices which shall be paid for a regulated product for that year, such prices to be compensatory for the cost of production of such product;

If this bill is indeed going to help the small farmer and assist the producer, what is wrong with accepting an amendment of that nature? There are many others. There are amendments such as those which would provide adequate provisions for appeal. We have asked for safeguards in many clauses. These have been refused. As far as I am concerned, there is far too much discretion left to the minister.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: There were many shortcomings in this bill when it was introduced. There are still many shortcomings as it stands this evening. Many of the refinements that have been incorporated into the bill were a result of pressure by the opposition. I agree with the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) who stated that the opposition party did a fantastic job in trying to patch up a piece of legislation that was ill-conceived and ill-advised.

The bill was presented in a distorted way. It was to have been a producers' bill. In the first instance it turned out to be a bureaucrats' bill. We attempted to change that. In the original instance the producer was not even mentioned in the bill. The producer was only mentioned in the clause dealing with penalties. This was to be a perfect bill, brought in after much consultation and penetrative study. Yet we have had to incorporate something like 30 or 35 amendments. Instead of being a perfect bill, we received a bill that set out to make agriculture nothing more than a public utility based on the philosophy of a cheap food policy. This was to have been enabling legislation, yet the submissions of the United Grain Growers, the Cattlemen's Association and the Palliser Wheat Growers Association called it a monolithic monster. They did not agree this was enabling legislation.

The Saskatchewan Hog Producers Association said that by their interpretation this is not permissive legislation. It invests unlimited powers in an act which may or may not represent the producers. On that basis they said they must voice opposition to the bill. The cattlemen said this bill represents a very severe erosion of the rights of producers to control their own destiny within the larger laws of society of Canada. The Cattlemen's Association is an independent group. They said it is their right to shape the

future of their own destiny. The Palliser Wheat Growers Association said that the bill was completely devoid of reality and totally unnecessary in the prairie region where exports are an absolute necessity—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Those of us who were interested just heard an excellent speech by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). What he had to say was very important with regard to the bill before the House. Because of the importance of the debate on this bill I ask Your Honour, with great respect, to implement the provisions of Standing Order 12(3) and ask members opposite to please maintain a little decorum.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle).

Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I promise hon. members I will be very brief. I wish to make two very important observations. First, marketing boards—not those that may be formed in the future but existing boards in Saskatchewan and Alberta and, in fact, marketing boards representing growers in the constituency of Vegreville—for some reason or another have telephoned me. I do not know why they do not have confidence in their own member. I was telephoned today and asked for assurance that this bill would be passed shortly because they will be having a meeting in Winnipeg in the very near future. As a matter of fact—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) is rising on a point of order.

Mr. McGrath: With the greatest respect, Mr. Speaker, I want to hear the speech of the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle). I ask Your Honour to enforce the provisions of Standing Order 12(3) and ask members opposite to pay respectful attention at least to one of their own members.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This is the second time the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has raised this point of order. The Chair has considerable sympathy for the hon. member. I do not want to be critical of members on either side of the House, but hon. members who want to make a contribution to the debate deserve the courtesy of a hearing.

Mr. Pringle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I make this point because the very people I am talking about are small family farmers who are represented by successful, existing marketing boards operating with head offices in Regina and Edmonton. They require Bill C-176 on an emergency basis so that they will be able to join with other marketing boards across the nation and arrange a co-ordinating program which they have ready and with which they want to proceed. Apparently the members from Saskatchewan and the member for Alberta are not interested in working with their own people and their own marketing board.