

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

on and how areas of Canada can divide up the market on an equitable basis. It reads as follows:

Some of Ontario's broiler chicken farmers are a little restless. They fear that too much may be given Quebec in current market sharing negotiations. Several have voiced an opinion that the two provinces should serve their own markets. Thus, Ontario with a population of 7 million and Quebec with a population of 6 million would produce a formula split of 7 to 6.

But there has to be some give and take. Currently Quebec has been asking for 39 per cent of the national market, with 35 per cent for Ontario—the two provinces have 74 per cent of Canada's output. "We couldn't get our producers to accept this," says Ontario broiler board manager John Janzen. "It would mean giving Quebec part of the Toronto market".

However, Jansen adds, Ontario chicken growers might accept a 50-50 split. "But there's been a lot of reluctance." A 50-50 split means that Ontario and Quebec each would have 37 per cent of the national market. In effect, this arrangement would give Quebec more than 500,000 consumers living in Ontario—what is known as the Ottawa market.

Here we have two provinces in Canada arguing over how they are going to split up their percentage of the national market. In effect, we have a situation where the two provinces have 74 per cent of the national broiler market with something like 59 per cent of the population. I say that anybody who does not live in one of the more densely populated areas of Canada, who lives in an area where there is considerable production, will live in constant fear of being brought into the ambit of this act against his will.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I suppose it can be considered unusual for an urban dweller to say something on this bill and in particular on the amendments brought forward by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). Throughout this debate I have been concerned about one thing. I have heard much about the producer, but it seems to me that no one has paid much attention to the consumer. It seems to me that we should be able to give some assistance to the consumer and assure him that costs will not rise. Throughout all the briefs, the underlying theme seems to have been that costs to the consumer will rise. I was very impressed with the brief of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and I would like to quote parts of it.

Mr. Rose: You were impressed? I thought it was disastrous.

Mr. Alexander: Yes, I was. This brief is dated February, 1971. In it we find the following statement:

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is fully cognizant of the need for an improved marketing mechanism at the basic producer level while at the same time taking note of the fact that any legislation affecting this segment of the economy will have substantial implications for the intermediate stages of processing and distribution as well as for the ultimate consumer.

While recognizing the need for an improved marketing mechanism at the primary producer level, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce wishes at this time to re-emphasize the fact that market prices, as determined by normal demand and supply relationships, are an indispensable part of our free enterprise economy. Legislation in this area should be designed to augment the free market rather than circumvent it through artificial restrictions and controls.

[Mr. Downey.]

It seems very strange to me, when I look at clause 22 of the bill—and perhaps I will be corrected if I am wrong—to find that only one paragraph of the clause refers to the rights of the consumer. I refer you to the clauses entitled "Objects" and "Powers". Clause 22 (b) provides:

to have due regard to the interests of producers and consumers of the regulated product or products.

In my view this is only a pious declaration of an intention on the part of the government because it does not spell anything out and it does not protect the consumer. The consumer is not represented. Supply management seems to have been mentioned very often in this debate, and it is not accepted by many people because it hampers free trade among provinces. So far as international markets are concerned, we will be shafted and in the long run it will add to the costs of the producer which will certainly be passed on to the consumer. I should like to put on record that when we deal with legislation such as this, in the long run we must be concerned about what will happen to the consumer. This provision will mean a hidden tax. The consumer will have to pay more for his goods.

It pleases me to note that after some deliberation and consideration the government was able to come upon a solution which allowed the vast majority of producers, except those who in the long run will be able to do as they see fit through enabling legislation, to take advantage of the act. I think there should be more debate on the ultimate cost to the consumer arising from passage of this bill. We would be well advised to think of that aspect of the matter.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I think it is generally known that I have always had a great deal of respect for members of the House of Commons who have spoken on agricultural marketing, grain bills, and other agricultural legislation. I have always been amazed at how many experts on agriculture there are in the House, but less impressed with the amount of expertise.

We have just heard from the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander), a notable lawyer and a very fine fellow. I am sure that when he got out of college and was given a piece of scroll which said, "You are now a lawyer," he did not go downtown and put up a sign, saying he was open for business as a lawyer. No, Mr. Speaker, he went to the legal profession and they welcomed him and told him to listen to them. They told him "When we have decided you are ready, you can go and put up your shingle and say that you are a lawyer, that in our opinion you are prepared to function, to operate, and to charge fees." They call that being admitted to the bar.

The farmer is a little bit better off than that, Mr. Speaker. I suggest that in every industry in Canada, in the United States, and in fact in most of the countries of the world a type of supply management is exercised. You will not find the automotive industry building cars without a market. The minute those people realize the potential of the market is drying up they stop building cars. As a matter of fact they have the industry so well organized that they do not even make a car any more until you buy