

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

CFU in the province of Quebec? I would like the secretary to take this down and to give us an answer in a few minutes.

• (3:40 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, I feel it should be possible to give the problem serious consideration. Let us save agriculture! Even if we had to call upon other classes of society to help save agriculture, let us do so. But we will save it only when we allow Canadian consumers to purchase production.

As long as there are credit restrictions, financial problems, people on welfare or unemployed cannot possibly buy the country's production. That is where the problem lies. The Minister of Agriculture knows it: the problem is a financial one. Social credit is the solution; that is what the minister proclaimed for 25 years, but today he no longer has the courage to do so.

An hon. Member: He has had a change of heart.

Mr. Caouette: And why? Has the Liberal spirit entered into his heart, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Goyer: He has assimilated it.

Mr. Caouette: If he could have the hon. member for Dollard assimilate it, he would benefit by it.

Mr. Speaker, this is a consumer problem. Indeed, consumers do not have purchasing power. Even if the farmers were asked to improve the quality of milk or wheat, or the workers to improve the quality of clothes or other products, or even if grants were paid out for the purpose of reducing prices, if the consumer does not have any money to buy, how can you solve the problem? You can not.

There is only one way to solve the agricultural problem: by increasing the consumers' purchasing power so that they might buy farm products. It is a simple as that. How to do it? By handing out national dividends.

The Minister of Agriculture knows what is meant by a national dividend. He preached it for 25 years at Medicine Hat, when he was a young Social Crediter. He seems to be losing heart as he gets older. He turned liberal. Today, he is no longer right. He no longer has the right to speak of a national dividend, of a compensated discount or of a monetary reform. Just the same he is very nice, but Canadians have been had for 103 years by very nice people who could never solve our problems.

[Mr. Caouette.]

They beat about the bush year after year, session after session, government after government. Grits or Tories, governments are unable to solve our problems. The Progressive Conservative might say that they sold wheat to Russia, China, India and many other countries of the world when they were in office, but that was because those countries happened to have poor crops. It had nothing to do with the government, crops were poor.

Countries which used to buy Canadian wheat now produce more wheat than we do. The problem is growing worse.

The government proposes the following solution: let us create agencies, encourage producers and control them along socialist lines. The government must therefore make decisions for them and compel them to abide by them. The minister is shaking his head.

In connection with the dairy industry in the province of Quebec, is the government not penalizing the farmers who have a milk surplus? The minister dares to shake his head. The government is taking \$10 million away from the eastern farmers and the minister shakes his head. He suggests that they are not being penalized. The farmers are ready to increase their production and the consumers expect that increased production. It is so true that in the United States \$1 billion was granted during one year as an incentive to dairy production. At a given time, it was realized that this was not enough and then \$2 billion was paid. Once the \$2 billion was spent, there was a shortage of dairy products in certain areas of the United States because consumers were buying a great quantity of milk.

Millions of dollars are spent to promote the sale of Coca Cola, but there is never enough money to promote the sale of dairy products, especially to enable consumers to buy them.

I said a while ago that some women would like to buy 8 to 10 quarts of milk daily for their family, but they cannot afford it because milk costs 38 cents a quart. They do not have the money to buy a quart of milk! The children must therefore drink water. The hon. member for Richelieu is aware of that situation. If he does not believe what I say, let him and the minister come with me and I will introduce them to families who need milk but do not have any. And the government penalizes dairy producers!

There are limits! How much longer will we be the losers through the passing of legislation such as Bill C-197, which claim to help the farmers. A decision is made to save