

*Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill*

• (4:10 p.m.)

According to clause 3 of Bill C-197, the members of the National Farm Products Marketing Council are appointed by the governor in council, therefore by the cabinet.

Besides, clause 5 says that the members of the Council become public servants, and so are independent from the farmers to whom they will not have to report at all. Consequently farmers will have no control over the marketing of their products.

Clause 6 says that the object of the act is to maintain and promote an efficient and competitive agriculture industry, which means the complete disappearance of average size or small farms.

The Council is empowered to require persons engaged in production or marketing to register with the agency, to maintain books under the provisions of the three paragraphs of clause 7 (e).

In addition, an inspector of that Council may, under clause 34, enter any place when he reasonably believes that there is a regulated product intended to be marketed and may examine any books, records or other documents in such place.

Pursuant to clauses 36 and 37, every person who violates any provision of this act or fails to comply with a requirement of the Council is guilty of, and I quote:

- (a) an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or
- (b) an offence punishable on summary conviction.

Mr. Speaker, the bill in its present form will surely be amended in committee, and I propose to attend all its sittings, because I strongly object to its passage. If a vote is taken, I will vote against it, because it must be amended at all costs, otherwise it is a strait-jacket put on the farmers. In my opinion, we should make this bill more democratic.

Instead of the government appointing all those who will implement this act, it would be advisable to divide that Council into three sectors, as my colleague, the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier), mentioned in the House on April 27 last.

I suggest that there be first, a federal sector; second, a provincial sector, and third, a sector made up by the producers themselves. Each sector would appoint its own representatives and thus have some discretion insofar as the implementation of this bill is concerned. If the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) finds it impossible to do that, I urge

[Mr. Beaudoin.]

him to delegate all his powers to the provinces, as I suggested it to him on June 4 last.

Primary producers groups want to appoint themselves their representatives, or have them appointed by their professional association, in order to ensure the control and the marketing of their products. They have their own set-up and they want their decisions to be carried out through the normal channels, that is, through their association. Every Canadian province has one or several farmers associations. That is why they want to have their own too, being more familiar than anyone with their individual or collective needs. They know better than anyone the cost of every consumer product they want to market. Now, in my opinion, they are better judges than anyone to advise the organization which is to govern them, under bill C-197, regarding the fixing of fair prices.

I feel that when an economic sector as important as agriculture is in a bad way, we should diagnose the trouble so as to remedy it as soon as possible.

I believe that up to now, the federal government has proved its inability to solve adequately the agricultural problem, whatever may think my friend from Richelieu, and I therefore ask the honourable minister once again to extend the scope of Bill C-197 with regard to the representation on the Council, or else to delegate his authority.

As far as I am concerned, the present situation could not be worse. The net subsidies to industrial milk and cream producers in Quebec have been as follows. The hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) had addressed the following question to the Minister of Agriculture:

What were the amounts granted to Quebec industrial milk producers for the years 1967, 1968 and 1969?

The answer was as follows:

1. Net subsidies to manufacturing milk and cream shippers in Quebec were as follows:

1967-68	\$41.2 million
1968-69	\$44.4 million
1969-70 (incomplete)	\$36.7 million

The second part of the question read as follows:

2. What amounts were withheld, for marketing surpluses or penalizing for overproduction manufacturing milk producers in Quebec, in the years 1967, 1968 and 1969?

Here is the answer:

2. The following amounts were withheld from the subsidies to pay for the cost of exporting surpluses:

1967-68	\$4.5 million
1968-69	\$7.2 million
1969-70 (incomplete)	\$13.6 million