

Summer Recess

sources over that 100-year history. First, there were the pioneers who came west prior to 1900, many of them prior to the coming of the steel in 1885. The second group were the homesteaders who probably came to the west from 1900 to 1920. Third, there is the present-day movement of new Canadians, and a significant number of Canadian-born younger people who have migrated from the central and Atlantic provinces. All three groups, in their respective times, shared a common philosophy and need. All were prepared to leave their homes and, very often, their country of birth to come west and begin a new life. The first two groups in particular endured incredible hardships over many years and several generations in this re-establishing process. All three groups shared a common goal and desire to be part of a new country with that visible and tangible evidence of owning their own home or farm and contributing as individuals to a new way of life.

This is why the property rights issue is so important to all of us in the west. It was almost an obsession with us when the indication was so apparent that the reference to God and property rights were to be left out of the Constitution. We have not forgotten that. I am confident we will emerge from this political crisis essentially because of the history, the circumstances and make-up of our peoples. I am referring, of course, to western Canada, which has much to be proud of and much to work for as we approach our second century in the west.

We must not settle for a unitary style of federal government in a country so vast in physical scale and so rich in resources in all its parts and in its peoples. Above all else, we must develop not only a new desire for, but a new way to make our Canada truly a confederation of its parts, its regions and its provinces.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hargrave: After the last two days of debate we should remind ourselves often of this bigger and more important picture.

I would like to make a few specific comments about the agricultural sector. Members of this House will be aware of my genuine concerns over the many years about drought in western Canada. I have spoken on this subject on numerous occasions over the last eight and a half years, and as recently as this spring. I have much pleasure tonight in describing an incredible turnaround in moisture and growth conditions throughout most of western Canada. Grass conditions in the short grass ranching parts of the southern prairies, which covers all of southern Alberta and most of the southwestern corner of Saskatchewan, are the best I have seen since 1953—that is 28 years. Grain crops are equally favourable with harvest only a few months away. This wonderful turnaround has given us all immense satisfaction and has restored our confidence in the ability of the prairies to come back and produce perhaps our largest total farm crop in history.

There is still one unfinished item from the 1980 and early 1981 drought which I hope will be attended to. I understand that the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. De Bané) is now to be responsible for the herd maintenance

program. I am sure he is aware that there are still some unsatisfied claims left from the drought program for last year and this spring.

I urge the minister to consider once again the excellent prioritizing of the new disbanded review committee. They went to a great deal of trouble and much labour to categorize four categories, and category one and two were of the highest priority which now total about 2,500 producers. I suggest most sincerely that they should be received by the minister and assessed since there are many in that group worthy of receiving some attention under that herd maintenance program. This number includes a small number of cattlemen on the Alberta side of the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, on the south slopes of the Cypress Hills going right down to the Montana border. The only possible explanation which may exist for this omission—and I regret having to say this—is that they are all in the Province of Alberta.

An hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Hargrave: I think that's a tragedy.

All Canadian cattle producers are disappointed that the meat import measure, Bill C-46, has not cleared the standing committee. There are only three witnesses still to be heard. Surely they could have been scheduled for hearing over the last two or three weeks. Surely that could have been arranged. There was lots of time when we were not sitting as a committee. The committee just seems to have folded, and this started about three weeks ago for no apparent reason.

It would be reassuring and helpful if the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) would make a positive statement as soon as possible with respect to Bill C-46 that the committee work will continue in the next session without any repetition. I once again remind the Minister of Agriculture about the serious reservations expressed by many of the witnesses about Bill C-46—expressed during the committee sessions—about the GATT agreements, the related items of guaranteed minimum access, those levels of imports of beef as determined by that guaranteed minimum access through GATT and the human population growth factor, that condition which Canada was evidently forced to agree to but no other country, especially the United States, had even to consider.

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Both of these items must surely be renegotiated. The Minister of Agriculture has been in Alberta all of this week attending the annual meeting of provincial ministers. Of course, with him were the ministers of agriculture from all our provinces. They do this every summer. I sincerely hope that they discuss, in some detail, such timely topics as one or two items I want to mention now. I would point out that it is still apparently too early to even hear some of the subjects which were discussed. However, these are very important meetings and I hope that they had some serious discussion about the harmonization of the increasing number of provincial stabilization and subsidy programs for both hogs and beef cattle. It must now be obvious to all of us that the increasing trend to balkanization