

*Business of Supply*

reasons given in the minister's two amendments on toploading. They relate to regional unfairness and incentives to overproduce.

Suppose a federal cow-calf stabilization program had been in effect for 1975, a program which might have paid out, say, \$50 per calf.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, whose allotted time has expired. He may continue if he has the unanimous consent of the committee. Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to continue?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Hargrave:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the committee for its courtesy. I shall speak only one or two minutes. I was saying, let us suppose that a federal cow-calf stabilization program had been in effect in 1975 under which \$50 per calf might have been paid out. The total cost would have been about \$275 million to the public treasury. What would have been the result? I suggest that the downward adjustment in our cow numbers which was so essential would not have occurred at least to the same necessary degree. I also suggest that a payment of \$50 per calf would not have been sufficient to help those in trouble, but would have created an atmosphere which would naturally lead producers to expect a continuance of the program year after year. In my opinion the actual market price of calves would have been somewhat lower than the true market level, owing to the effect of the \$50 subsidy.

While it is true that the large numbers of steers now in the pipeline will have some pricing problems, by and large the Canadian cattle industry has either resolved or is in the process of resolving, its own problems in a market place which includes the United States market. You can say it was rough justice, that it was swift and sure. At least the cattle industry can now see much better days ahead. And, Mr. Chairman, that is more than can be said for the egg and dairy industries of our country.

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** Mr. Chairman, I understand that the committee will be interrupted at 5.45 for Royal Assent. As I am to chair at eight o'clock this evening a committee on Indian affairs, I have little time to make my remarks.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Don't worry, his nibs will be late.

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** I will not cover the entire ground covered by the hon. member for Medicine Hat; I shall leave that to the Minister of Agriculture who is a wise man. I admit that the hon. member who spoke on behalf of the cattle industry mentioned many good points.

I wish to bring to the attention of the committee a situation which developed in British Columbia, where cattlemen met and voted to adopt the B.C. income assurance program. I think the committee is aware of conditions which had existed in the province, of the difficult times ranchers went through. Many of them were on their knees. We had a poor crop in the area a couple of years ago, cattle prices were low, and some operators were forced to their knees.

[Mr. Hargrave.]

I am not speaking of cattlemen who had just established themselves in business. They were not fly-by-night operators, here today and gone tomorrow. Many of them were cattlemen who had been in business 30 or 40 years. Actually some of them were descendants of the people who had displaced my ancestors in that part of the country, so you can see they were solid, good types. Many of those guys survived and were able to carry on as producers in British Columbia only because they became involved in the income assurance program which was introduced in that province. I know some are concerned about abuses connected with the program, and about people becoming overly dependent on such programs. I only say that such programs, if handled and administered properly, can be good. It was a good program and helped many cattlemen in the province to survive.

I want to speak for a few minutes about the disease, blue tongue. I say to the minister that we have discussed this disease in committee, and I emphasize again how concerned British Columbia ranchers are about it. I understand that 49 herds in the southern part of the Okanagan Valley are afflicted with the disease, although I do not know how many animals are actually involved. The situation is serious and concerns many ranchers. I have no qualms about the eradication program and have the highest regard for the health of animals people, the veterinarians involved with that special branch of the Department of Agriculture. They did a good job. The eradication program was necessary. Nothing else could be done, I submit.

Let me enter a note of caution. I am concerned about the possibility of herds in that part of the province being reinfected unless there is a similar eradication program in the state of Washington. The herds on the Canadian side are very close to herds in the state of Washington. In some cases ranch lands are side by side, and herds on both sides of the border are often close to each other. I am told that the infecting insects, known as "no see'em" culicidae, have a very short flying range. However, I really do not buy all of this. I would like to see the minister make great efforts to get the state of Washington and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Butz to take a long hard look at the program in the state of Washington as it relates to the re-infection of our cattle population in the south of British Columbia.

● (1740)

I wish to get a little more parochial now and a little closer to home and talk about the future of the research station in Kamloops. This station has been doing range management research since about 1936. It is a good station with a good history. It has served the ranching industry of that province very well.

Lately the research staff has diminished to five. Over the years, there have been approximately seven research scientists involved in animal research, soil, range management research, and so on. One problem recently identified as being of high priority for the ranchers is related to deer-cattle competition for range.

On behalf of the ranching industry in British Columbia I ask the minister to take a hard long look at this. Perhaps that has already been done. I know the minister has been looking at it on behalf of the ranchers' advisory committee there. I ask that the two positions at the Kamloops