

been wise by not barring our markets to the Australians and New Zealanders, for very good reasons. We have been wise by not being so protective that we forced up the prices to the detriment of everyone. But the prices do have to rise, and they should do so in a genuine policy of obtaining markets for the products. It should be made to compete fairly with the pork and poultry markets.

If we push this idea it will not answer all the problems, but it will at least put the livestock people on notice that instead of allowing the individual farmers to get out of the business and go into grain they have some responsibility to save their own industry. They must get out and find a 2 per cent, 3 per cent or 4 per cent market which will take the excess off at all times and keep the prices buoyant here. When they can get out and do it themselves they are in harmony and it saves the government a great deal of money.

Finally, I want to talk about droughts. This has a bearing on this bill. I think the minister knows that my area of southeastern Saskatchewan produces more cattle per acre than any other area in the west. The figures will not be as good in the 1981 census as they were when the last census was taken in 1971. I see these farmers getting out of the business for economic reasons. It is hard work and when they get to be 55 or 60 years old they slow down a bit. They do not have sons who are willing to take up the business for the returns they receive. I see all the feed lots closing down, except for those that handle a few hundred head. I want to suggest a number of little things I think might help.

First, we have a signed agreement with the province of Saskatchewan that under this contract a minimum of 50,000 acres of land must be irrigated by the damming of the Diefenbaker Lake and the Saskatchewan River, the Gardiner Dam. I do not blame the government for not carrying this measure out in the earlier stages, since the price of grain did not make it worth while for grain farming. We now have this big cattle population, two and a half times as large as it was 25 years ago with 50,000 or 100,000 acres of irrigated land producing fodder two or three times a year, 20 to 40 acres per farm, or whatever is needed, you can live 20, 30 or 100 miles away and still have access to it. I think it is time we put the finger on the Saskatchewan government and told them to get some of that land under irrigation and let the cattle farmers for 200 or 300 miles around have access on the same terms as everyone else.

Second, the Department of Agriculture over 20 years ago spent a great deal of money, along with the provinces, mapping the underground rivers running under the prairies, including the Peace River, if my memory serves me correctly. All those maps are available in the research offices of each of the three provincial governments. If they cannot be found there then they are here in Ottawa. These aquifers are less than a thousand feet under the ground. Some are salty but some are fresh, and they are huge. The best one starts in the Peace River, B.C., comes all across northern Alberta into northern Saskatchewan, right down the centre of Saskatchewan, then turns east north of Regina and goes right through into Manito-

ba. That is good water and the maximum depth would probably be about 500 feet. That is the Hatfield River. There must be 20 or 30 of these underground rivers.

I am not talking about the deep ones at 1400, 1700 or 2000 feet. Those are all salty down there. This one is fresh. We have enough technology, even if the water is slightly sodium based or calcium based in its salt form, to correct that to a degree which would make it potable for cattle. These wells are drilled on a grid system every 20 miles all across the prairies. You can get the figures for those wells and calculate where the water is close to your farm. But in the emergency we may be facing this year I think those maps should be in the hands of Members of Parliament. Many do not even know they exist, Mr. Speaker, but if those maps could be dug out and the members could be told what they mean, they could get them into the hands of the municipal sectors. Then when the PFRA goes out to help solve the water problem this year they will know where to look. In some places the wells are actually in place and can be piped around great distances.

I think that is my main suggestion, Mr. Speaker. I have just one more to make. I have tried it before, but I will try it again.

● (1540)

Farmers collect their cattle to feed. Perhaps they have 5,000 head or more. To my knowledge in Canada we have not recycled manure. Do not laugh; that manure is worth \$200 a ton at present prices.

An hon. Member: It's gold.

Mr. Hamilton: It is in the form of pure food, one can circulate right back to the cattle, whether they are dairy cattle or any other kind. I suggest all this knowledge is available. We had a conference in Regina about five or six years ago. This knowledge is in volume form and should be guided into the hands of the people who are talking about the beef problems. If a man can get more value from the manure of his animal, than he can from its beef, he should not bother holding his nose. He should just go and make the money. I have seen this done, but we were reluctant to talk about it. Believe me, in the state in which the cattle industry is now, we had better start considering this. It has to be done by large feeders, and maybe it has to be done by governments, but it is money-making operation for anyone ventures into it.

Thank you very much for letting me ramble on. I hope the minister—I know he has been listening—will grab at some of these ideas and maybe put a little pressure on the proper people. I think we would serve our industry well if we did that.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on Bill C-46. It is a commendable piece of legislation which will assist our farmers and ranchers. It has been spoken about in this House and, clearly in the speeches I have heard from all parties so far, hon. members have underscored that it will be of benefit to the farming and ranching communities. However, I think there has been a false impression left among the citizens of the country, that that is the