

Supply—Agriculture

the grade is going to be until they are hung up on the rail and the government grader grades the hogs.

Mr. Studer: Is that a pool stockyard?

Mr. Bryson: I should like to know what instructions the farmer has ever received that he can get the difference between the \$18.75 as found on this slip I have—

Mr. Gardiner: If, instead of getting up here, you will ask every farmer to be sure to go to the pool organization at the stockyard in Melfort they will tell him what the situation is.

Mr. Bryson: Why should they send these slips to members of parliament if there is provision made for them to get the money through the regular channels? I cannot see any reason.

Mr. Gardiner: I can give you some reasons but I will not insult you by doing so.

Mr. Bryson: In any case, I think it has to be admitted that there is a great deal of confusion and I still wish the minister would explain to me how he can get up in the house and say there is a floor price when the price of hogs starts to go down below the floor. He does not maintain the floor price. He drops the floor, as he has done on one or two other occasions. In my opinion we are in exactly the same position today as we were 20 years ago so far as the orderly marketing of hogs, cattle—

Mr. Studer: You are in the dark.

Mr. Bryson: —or any other livestock product is concerned. Until the government is prepared to introduce an over-all national livestock policy I do not see how we are going to get anything different from what we have today. A certain pattern has been followed for a great many years. It is the same old pattern and the losses and hardship suffered by the prairie farmer because of price instability are impossible to calculate. We know that they are great. Long-term production planning is impossible. It is not even practical to contemplate it in the face of price instability. When prices are low—this is the pattern we have seen over the years—breeding stock becomes scarce and the market appears to be rather favourable from the point of view of farmers going into the livestock industry, and that is exactly what they do. By absorbing stock from the market for breeding purposes the market is further depleted. Then we begin to see an increase in the price of livestock. Prices start to go up.

Instead of buying at high prices the packer takes advantages of the low prices and fills

[Mr. Bryson.]

his lockers full of meat. His storage capacity is filled. When the farmer has completed his breeding program and starts to put his product on the market the packer will not buy it because in the meantime the price has started to rise. The packer uses the products he has stored in his plant during the period of low prices. That is the situation we face. The same cycle of events has taken place for the last 20 years. The farmer cannot hold back his product because it is perishable. He has to put it on the market, but the packer will not buy it because he does not have to buy it. He has plenty of meat in his locker.

Then we have the inefficient producer who went into the livestock business in the hope of high profits, and because of the price situation he cannot maintain his herd now that prices are falling. He has got to sell it, lock, stock and barrel. This further depresses prices to the point where the efficient producer is no longer able to carry on. These are the problems that we must face up to. Nothing that I have heard the minister say and in nothing that I have read in any of the acts that have been passed by this government do I find anything that will solve the problem. There is only one solution and it is this. We must have in this country an agricultural prices support policy on a national basis. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, before this debate is over I hope the minister will get to his feet once again and see whether he can give us a clear and forthright statement as to what constitute the support prices about which we hear so much.

Mr. Studer: You would not understand it anyway.

Mr. Blackmore: Mr. Chairman, I believe that all hon. members enjoyed the minister's opening statement. Ever since I came to the house 20 years ago it has been a matter of astonishment to me how enthusiastic the minister always is over what he has to tell.

Mr. Studer: He has something to boast about.

Mr. Blackmore: He becomes so completely optimistic that he convinces himself. In my particular area I do not find much justification for the glowing statement which the minister made pertaining to agriculture. However, it is not my purpose to undertake to find any particular fault with the minister's statement.

I wish to raise four matters which I believe the Canadian producers ought to face up to without much more delay. Many hon. members have brought to the attention of the house this year already the fact that