

We have recently seen how quickly the Americans can move in matters of border retaliation, and we simply cannot win that kind of trade war. As recently as mid-January of this year United States Secretary of Agriculture Butz told a small visiting group of Canadian members of parliament and provincial MLAs that the United States would move quickly and decisively with border restrictions if Canada chose the subsidy route on major agricultural commodities involved in international trade, such as cattle and beef.

The companion policy decision to be made by our Canadian cattle industry must also be whether or not we intend to go all out and produce cattle and beef and seriously compete with the United States, at least in proportion to our cattle numbers, and this means moving to a net export position, or very close to it. The alternative to this is the same alternative to the North American market, which is an internal ultimate supply-management for our cattle industry in Canada. Surely consumers will have a say here, if only through the marketplace, since minimum cost beef can only come from efficient high production which is geared to what I consider to be the best market in the world, the North American market.

In any event, the decision as to which route our Canadian cattle industry takes must surely be made by our own beef cattle industry and not by governments. No one will question the need for governments—especially the federal government—to provide certain guidelines as to animal health, trade matters, etc., but that ultimate decision must be made by cattlemen. I wish to conclude with some specific questions and comments to the Minister of Agriculture and his department, all relating to our cattle industry. These are in series to which I hope the minister might respond a little later.

Why has his department ceased reporting the monitored weighted average price which used to come out monthly in the blue book? Producers are entitled to this, especially if we are to have support prices. I should not have to put questions on the order paper to get this information. Why was Canada's export quota allotment to the United States recently reduced by 4.5 million pounds and an identical increase awarded to Australia and New Zealand by the U.S.A.? Was this protested by our Department of Agriculture and by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce? Is our Canadian cattle and beef still being used as a pawn in trade matters for the ultimate benefit of other industries, such as the auto pact?

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association made a very useful presentation to the Canadian Tariff and Trade Committee as a reference to GATT negotiations. Has this presentation been used in the Tokyo round of discussions, or will it be used? On another trade matter, current offshore imports of beef, that is, from Australia and New Zealand, are being dumped into Canada at price discounts of as much as 15 cents per pound under prices in the United States for the same kind of offshore imports into that country. This has a direct tendency to lower our Canadian cow prices. What about the United States' 10 per cent ad valorem duty on Canadian beef and processed meats, which I consider to be a one-way inequity which has no equivalent on our part in Canada?

Business of Supply

I will continue to remind the minister of the need for a Canadian meat import law. In his December 31 press release he as much as promised this item, without using the phrase "meat import law". I urge the minister to read that press release once again, and if the minister again reminds me of his sarcastic comment involving the free traders in the Canadian Cattlemen's Association wanting protection, I will remind him that as long as the U.S.A. employs this device by presidential decree—that is their meat import law—that is reason enough for its use in trade emergencies here in Canada.

● (1730)

Let me return to the stabilization question. Will the minister announce the 1976 support level for fed cattle, now? I know the minister has stated that such an announcement made too early might distort the market, but announcing it late denies the producer of a basic right and information which could establish a more realistic market level for feeder cattle as they relate to finished beef. I say to the minister, let us be frank. A late announcement also permits political manipulation.

Mr. Whelan: We would not do that!

Mr. Hargrave: Will there be a federal cow-calf stabilization plan? If not, say so. Let us have an end to this play on words such as "cattle", "beef" and "cows", etc., words the minister insists on using every time he is questioned. His parliamentary secretary is now doing it, as evident from his response to my colleague from Vegreville in the adjournment debate on May 17. As reported at page 13604 of *Hansard* the parliamentary secretary said in part:

Ever since the original 1958 legislation "cattle" has been interpreted to mean slaughter cattle. We continue to consider that the named commodity, cattle, is represented by slaughter cattle.

This is nonsense. By implication the minister and the parliamentary secretary suggest that Bill C-50, which the minister sponsored, does not permit a cow-calf plan. Of course it does, and the minister knows it. I ask him just to answer my question on the subject. If there is not to be such a plan he should say so, and very quickly.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I shall refer to a newspaper article. Last Saturday, May 15, in a *Toronto Star* feature story on the Minister of Agriculture, the minister was quoted as saying:

All the farmers want is to be guaranteed—if I'm a productive person, make sure I get a proper return.

I suggest that this is a socialistic philosophy which the majority in the Canadian cattle industry does not accept.

Mr. Whelan: Come, now.

Mr. Hargrave: It represents a direct departure from any semblance of a market dominated by supply and demand. My own personal experience suggests that most productive farmers want the opportunity and freedom to exploit the opportunities of the market.

Mr. Whelan: That's a red herring argument.

Mr. Hargrave: I can personally support the stop-loss concept of Bill C-50 for the cattle industry, but not the toploading provisions with regard to cattle, for the very