

When I talk about honesty in politics, these are some of the things I have in mind. I do not mind being told about the bad things, when they exist. If I were to say that this country, with such a fragile constitution, as I said earlier, did not have some problems, that would be untrue, but when we are comparing problems—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. minister, but his allotted time has expired. He may continue with unanimous consent. Does he have unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Five minutes.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, the deputy speaker down at the other end of the House is telling me exactly how many minutes I should use. I hope you have noticed him. That is the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), and that is about the only thing he is centered on, as far as that goes.

If we compare the problems of Canada with the problems of any other country, and I do not care which it is, we find ours are minute by comparison. We have talked about the problems in respect of agriculture, for instance. I think I should say a few words about this industry. I will be as quick as I can.

Never in the history of the agricultural industry in Canada have the producers done as well as they have in the last five years, eleven months, so many days and so many hours—since I was appointed Minister of Agriculture! I suggest that humbly, Mr. Speaker. Let me just put a few figures on the record in relation to farm cash receipts for the period from January to July of 1977, and for the same period in 1978.

From January to July, farm cash receipts in respect of crops for 1977 amounted to \$2,558 million as compared to \$3,003 million for 1978, an increase of some 17 per cent over the same period last year. That is even better than my best economists advised me was possible. Mind you, I never knew an economist who was right, but that is even better than the best economist advised. Cash receipts in respect of livestock have increased 19 per cent in the same period. We have often talked about the livestock industry.

I suggest hon. members opposite should talk to some of their new members in relation to food policy. Those new members have said many things about food policy and what that party is going to do in relation to food strategy to lower food prices. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Clark) has said he is going to make tremendous changes in respect of the dairy industry. I suggest to hon. members that before they follow that path they should check to see what the European community is doing. It is studying Canadian dairy policy and is adopting some of the same policies we are following. Australia is doing the same thing regarding its dairy industry. It is following Canadian policies.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hate to interrupt the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), but I think it should be pointed out that he did not touch on the subject of agriculture during the course of his speech. He is

now beginning to do so as a result of the generosity of members in this House who have agreed to allow him extra time. Notwithstanding the fact that he has made an eloquent speech here today, to which we have listened with attention, during which he talked about his leader, national unity, and the economy, he did not refer to that subject for which in this government he has responsibility to the House and the country. He is now trying to bootleg in an agricultural speech on borrowed time, and I think that is unfair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): I would suggest to the hon. member that on many occasions while sitting here I have observed hon. members wandering from the subject at hand, yet the Chair has been pretty lenient. I suggest we listen to the hon. minister.

● (1422)

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, I was here the other day when the right hon. member for Prince Albert was talking, and we let him talk as long as he wanted. The hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) is saying that I have no right to talk about anything else. My constituency is 90 per cent urban, and these people depend on the agricultural industry, as does the agricultural industry depend on the commercial and manufacturing industries. They are interdependent. The House has given me the authority to continue on, and I do not intend to abuse that rule any more than anybody else. The hon. member is surmising and placing innuendo on what I am attempting to do. Can the hon. member foresee the future?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Just the other day, I was stopped.

Mr. Whelan: The hon. gentleman was not stopped while I was here.

On going over some figures, Ontario is up 16 per cent in agricultural income; Saskatchewan, 14 per cent; Quebec, 15 per cent; Manitoba, 23 per cent; B.C., 8 per cent; Nova Scotia, 6 per cent; New Brunswick, 2 per cent; Prince Edward Island, 4 per cent, and Alberta is up 3 per cent. These figures are just for part of the year; the final sales have not taken place. We are merely making a comparison with the year before.

There is not a government in the world that has put in better programs for agriculture, or a country that has more productive people than we do in Canada. In the last few years, in this span I just humbly talked about earlier, the farmers in Canada have produced \$2,000 per capita more in produce than the farmers in the United States. We hear so much about the great food machine in the United States of America, but we have the best farmers, and at the present time we have more younger farmers than we have ever had since 1962, actively engaged in agriculture. The ratio of young farmers entering and staying in agriculture is the highest it has ever been for nearly 20 years.

When the hon. member talks about bootlegging, I hope he is not suggesting for one instant with respect to the total economy of this country, especially agriculture which provides approximately 25 per cent of the jobs in Canada, that the