

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I said yesterday that we are watching this very closely and if this program is not doing what we want it to do we will have to change it.

**Mr. Gleave:** As we run a real risk of heavy runs on the market because of the very program the minister is putting into effect, which will further depress prices, will the minister include some dates in this program and at least tell farmers that it will continue into June or July so that there will not be an emptying of feedlots and, following that, a real rise in prices?

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, we stated when we announced this program that it will be continued until the whole beef market levels out to where we think it should be in order to give the producer a proper amount for the beef he is placing on the market. We intend to continue the program or a program that will do just that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Perhaps the Chair shall see the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar and the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley on supplementaries and then try to go to the next subject.

**Mr. Gleave:** Since price is the key to this program and the price to the producer is surely the key to the government's objective, will the minister tell us what price objective he is aiming for? What is the level of the price objective he mentioned a moment ago?

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, I thought I made it fairly clear when we talked about what the return ought to be to the producer. We realize that prices so far today are not giving enough return to the producer to keep him in business. That is why we are as concerned as he and all other members. If there happens to be some kind of collusion between the packing firms that are buying the cattle, I can certainly ask my colleague, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

**Mr. Whelan:**—to have their purchasing practices investigated under the Combines Investigation Act. As far as I am concerned, it is much too early in the program even to suggest I do that at this time, unless hon. members have advice otherwise.

**Mr. Speaker:** In addition to the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley, there are others seeking supplementaries, including the hon. member for Wellington and the hon. member for Middlesex. Perhaps we might allow the hon. member for Richmond to ask his question and then return to the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley.

[Translation]

## BEEF SUBSIDY—APPLICATION OF PROGRAM

**Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Agriculture. Can he advise the House which of the A-1 and A-2 cattle categories, once the program concerning A-3 and A-4 cattle is terminated, will benefit from the seven cent subsidy?

[Mr. Gleave.]

[English]

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, all cattle used for human consumption in Canada are inspected. There should be no difficulty in determining the grades of cattle being sold in Canada for human consumption.

[Translation]

**Mr. Beaudoin:** The minister got my question all wrong, Mr. Speaker.

I am talking about cattle sold at public auctions where nobody knows where they come from and who the producers are. When the program concerning A-3 and A-4 cattle is terminated, can he say which of the A-1 and A-2 cattle categories will benefit from the subsidy?

[English]

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, the market shows the real value of cattle. It has always showed the real value. Any person trying to sell is certainly aware of what that market is that day. That is the way cattle have been sold. We do not intend to change that unless something drastic happens in the market that is different from what has been shown in past operations.

## AMOUNT OF SUBSIDY TO BEEF PRODUCERS

**Mr. Norval Horner (Battleford-Kindersley):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the Minister of Agriculture. Perhaps he can clear up some of the confusion he has created. There is no confusion in the minds of the packers. They are buying meat at five cents less than before the minister made the announcement. In his statement released yesterday the minister said that the subsidy on cattle retroactive to March 4 would be seven cents. On a radio program one hour ago someone from his department said it would not be done by grade but that they would average it at five cents. Perhaps the minister can clear that up. Will it be five cents average on all cattle sold or seven cents on A-1 and A-2?

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the whole idea of making it retroactive to March 4 is to compensate those people who delivered Canadian cattle when they were able to put them on the market. The over-all compensation will be seven cents for A-1 and A-2. Compensation will be paid on A-3 and A-4, and on all cattle it will average out to about five cents a pound.

● (1430)

[Translation]

## REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY PRODUCERS

**Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval):** I wish to direct a supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture.

In view of the fact that when Bill C-176 concerning farm product marketing came before us, hon. members of the opposition and the leaders of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association opposed any federal government intervention into the marketing—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Would the hon. member kindly ask his question?