

*Slaughter of Calves*

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** Liberals don't cause droughts.

**An hon. Member:** Thank God; they cause too many other things.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** They are all wet.

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** Those socialists out there in British Columbia are causing other problems, and the people know what to do about that, at least in my riding.

There was a hay shortage last summer in British Columbia and many of the ranchers had to haul in hay over great distances. Many of the ranchers had a lot of outstanding bills, but as a result of a good market last year some of them were able to get out of the hole. Some were able to grow crops, but many ranchers on dry land had to haul hay from as far away as Manitoba, and even from the United States, at over \$100 a ton.

**An hon. Member:** That's free enterprise.

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** The socialist government in British Columbia didn't do a doggone thing for the ranchers of that province.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** Just let me finish the few remarks I have to make on behalf of those people I represent, and I will look after the socialists in the next election.

Many of the small ranchers in British Columbia had a double bit of bad luck. They hoped to be able to get out of that situation last year because of good markets, but this year as a result of various things, including the uncertain market, not only in Canada but in the United States, they were unable to do so. I suggest that the price and wage control program in the United States was one of the biggest factors contributing to the difficulties facing the beef industry.

**An hon. Member:** Who told you that?

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** I can give you all kinds of proof for the statement that the price and wage program of the United States caused difficulty in the beef industry. I am sure the cattlemen were happy that the people did not elect those over on that side who advocated a price and wage control policy during the last election campaign. That is certainly the case in respect of the ranchers in my part of the country. They are among the last who advocate free enterprise, and they are pretty great guys.

I must agree with a couple of things said by the spokesman for the NDP. He expressed concern over the fact that these 600 calves were slaughtered and buried. No one in his right mind likes to see a situation such as we had in northern Quebec in respect of these calves. No one likes to see food wasted. In my opinion that was an irresponsible act on the part of those people. It should not have occurred under any circumstances. I do not wish always to be

[Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo).]

referring to my colleague from Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave), but I agree with those sentiments he expressed.

• (2200)

One can imagine the frustrations of those people because of the amount of money they must spend in order to feed their calves. In talking to them one hears that it can cost up to 60 cents a pound to finish a pound of beef. That is a pretty rough situation. I do not believe even the Social Credit economics could work that out, Mr. Speaker. There is just no way to survive in a situation like that.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Give money to the consumer and that will fix the whole thing.

**An hon. Member:** That solves that problem—next one.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I move we adjourn.

**Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** I realize there are varying points of view about what should be done in this situation. There are no easy answers. I have a mixed view about this situation.

When the President of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association was in my riding we were told the point of view of that association was that the cattlemen should be left alone, that they are surviving. I do not fully subscribe to that view. That view might be all right for the big rancher. He can survive. He can ride it through.

However, there are many smaller producers, those who might have 200 or 300 head of cattle. They have been great contributors to the cattle industry and to the food supply of the country over the years. They have a very difficult time. I think something must be done for them. As a matter of fact in discussions with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) I have asked that he introduce a program. I think it is incumbent on him to introduce a program. I realize that it is rather difficult for him to do something at this time when many provinces such as Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have introduced their own programs.

I should like to suggest two or three things which might be done. There is a need for ready cash. Many ranchers in British Columbia have suggested that perhaps there should be outright grants. I do not like outright grants. I do think, however, there is a good case to be made for interest-free loans similar to those available under the programs offered in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. Quebec probably has the best program of all, yet we hear about government becoming too much involved in some of these things.

I think there is a real opportunity here for the cattlemen to start culling a lot of their older cattle. They should sell many of the old cows. Perhaps some ranchers have been saving them so that they would have more calves in the event that the price should increase. There never has been a better time to cull some of the old crotchety cows.

I also believe there must be a greater effort made to sell more beef. A program has been introduced by the British Columbia cattlemen which I think will be useful. They would like to cut out many of the middle people. They