

discuss Bill C-50 today, and immediately following that the House leader of the NDP rose and stated he was not consulted. This is the type of trickery this government plays just a little too often.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Horner: Madam Speaker, I am not going to debate the point of whether or not the Minister of Agriculture has the power to dictate, as I think it is pretty well established right now, but he does have some sway within the cabinet regarding House business. A former minister of agriculture and a former hon. member for Medicine Hat thought he was going to be House leader when he joined the Liberal Party, holding a great deal of power within the cabinet. This minister does not even think he has any power within the cabinet in respect of House business.

The minister spoke about the views of the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain on this bill. I have the proceedings of the committee before me. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain stated that this was a good bill but he had reservations in respect of two concepts, indexing and top-loading. That is not a direct quotation, but if anyone questions me very seriously I could quickly find what he said in the proceedings which I have before me.

I have the same concern about top-loading and indexing. I would not try to bring members opposite up to date in respect of what has been said about this bill as recorded in *Hansard*; that would be an almost impossible task, in view of the closed minds of the trained seals opposite.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Hardly trained minds.

Mr. Horner: That is right.

An hon. Member: You talk like a westerner.

Mr. Horner: This bill basically does two things about which I am concerned in addition to top-loading and indexing. The bill refers to amendments to the old stabilization bill brought about by the Conservative Party back in the late 1950—1959, I think it was. It deals with amendments to that legislation and updates the mandatory average to 90 per cent instead of 80 per cent. Also, it makes the average in respect of five years instead of the old provision of ten years. The support price should be above 90 per cent.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave) dealt with the question of wool, and I should just like to touch briefly on this subject. The Sheep Council of Canada presented a brief to the committee on agriculture in which it suggested that wool should be included as a mandatory commodity. It can be argued that sheep fall within the mandatory commodity category in this bill. Until a few years ago the sheep industry was assisted through a support price on wool. A few years ago the former minister of agriculture said it was wrong for the federal government to be supporting the price of wool because wool was becoming an outdated commodity and would soon be no longer in use. He suggested that polyesters were taking over in the clothing business and that wool would become obsolete in the world. I have paraphrased the reasons of

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the former minister of agriculture for discontinuing support of the sheep industry in respect of wool.

Times have changed, and polyesters have become pretty expensive. In my opinion, they are not the greatest materials for clothing and the trend in the trade has swung back more and more to the use of wool. We now see wool as a very durable commodity throughout the world. Those in the sheep industry believe that the best way the industry could be assisted is by supporting the price of wool. Wool produced in Canada is subject to price fluctuations brought about by the situations of supply and demand. Supply is mainly from Australia and New Zealand. If there is surplus wool production in those countries, our prices drop drastically.

Canada is a very small producer of wool in terms of world trade. We do not produce anywhere near Canada's own requirements for wool. For that reason I feel wool should be supported. The Sheep Council of Canada believes the industry should be assisted through a supported wool price and I am very disappointed that the Minister of Agriculture did not see fit to state clearly today that the sheep industry would be assisted through a support price for wool. I have not given up this fight and I will continue, with the aid of the Sheep Council and members of parliament, to press for reconsideration in respect of the stabilization of wool prices for the benefit of the sheep industry in particular and Canadians generally.

This bill has one other fault in addition to top-loading and indexing in that it grants the minister all kinds of powers. The Agricultural Stabilization Act, chapter A-9 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, has ten sections which deal with the powers of the board. Section 10 has seven paragraphs, running from (a) to (g), outlining those powers. This legislation gives the board power to make deficiency payments, to buy and sell, and to do nearly everything but implement supply management. Bill C-50 states quite clearly that all other powers which the minister wants are to be placed at his fingertips.

We have seen in Canada some attempt at supply management. I am not particularly pleased with the manner in which it has worked in respect of CEMA and the broiler industry. There is no question about it; supply management would allow everybody to divide up the pie. But the main question is, how big should the pie be? Because of our ability to produce agricultural commodities in Canada, we have felt we should be broad-minded enough to consider the many starving people throughout the world who need the food which Canada has the ability to produce.

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We should, through well thought-out agricultural policies, encourage production and play our part in the world in an attempt to alleviate misery, starvation and hunger in areas which are not as fortunate as we are. In respect of this power in Bill C-50, I see the Department of Agriculture adopting a very inward-looking program with a policy based on the attitude: feed thyself at high prices. That is really what the Minister of Agriculture is saying to the agricultural industry in Canada.

I am opposed to high prices, but I am also opposed to inefficient production. I believe supply-management in one way or another eventually brings about inefficient