

Cattle Premium

that finished pork as well as live cattle. Unless there are negotiations with the United States and they agree to a tariff, I would not be in favour of imposing one. I say this frankly in the House. I am not prepared to say, however, in respect of the long-term.

The North American exchange of cattle and hogs is endangered. Even in the past few weeks an objection has been raised against the surcharge which the government put into effect for a period of time. I want to say again, and this disturbs me, that an impromptu and ad hoc approach, particularly to the cattle end of the farming business, has characterized this government in the last few months. First, they imposed a surcharge and then an embargo. The surcharge was removed and a temporary program set up. I agree that under these circumstances the government might need breathing space or time, but I really urge the Minister of Agriculture and the minister in charge of the Wheat Board to say what is the program for support prices for cattle and hogs. I urge them to cease jockeying about with the feed grain policy because the farmers out there want to know what it is and if it is going to affect their production. If they do now know, it will also affect consumer prices.

● (1440)

I do not believe the consumer thinks he is getting cheap food. It may be the opinion of some other people, but the answers to the questionnaires which I sent out last week have revealed that people in Saskatoon do not think they are getting cheap food and the farmers know they are in a bind. They want a policy with some continuity, and this is the point to which I think the government should address themselves forthwith.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Marie Boisvert (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I have first returned from a tour of my constituency during which I visited 22 of the 27 rural parishes. Farmers are now deeply distressed. They are exchanging a dollar for four quarters and sometimes they only get three. They have to tackle the exorbitant cost of feed grain while consumers must face the exorbitant cost of food for their family.

The minister is proposing a subsidy of 7 cents a pound to beef producers. It is quite obvious that this action will not control the cost of living increase and that the consumers will still be paying increasingly higher prices for their food.

The minister is even taking the precaution of saying: I emphasize the fact that prices to the consumers will not be adversely affected. What he means is that even if he gives a subsidy of 7 cents to producers, prices will not increase proportionately. It would be paradoxical if producers were subsidized while consumers would have to pay more for their supplies.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, we will have to begin very soon to think about the consumers. We think about the producers and prices keep rising. We will soon have to subsidize the consumers because they will no longer be able to supply themselves.

We Social Crediters often say: We must think about people before thinking about animals. One of these days,

[Mr. Gleave.]

the government will have to consider that and come to the conclusion that for the well-being of the people, we must call on the people.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**TABLING OF BRIEF ON SKAGIT RIVER VALLEY SUBMITTED TO UNITED STATES FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION**

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, while we are on motions, may I have the permission of the House to table in both official languages, a copy of a government brief on the Skagit River Valley submitted to the U.S. federal power commission through the U.S. state department on March 14. It had been my intention to table this on Monday, but since the United States has already released the text I thought I should table it now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. Since the House has given unanimous consent to reverting to motions for one specific purpose, namely, to allow the Minister of Agriculture to make a statement, I am sure hon. members would agree to extending that unanimous consent to the Secretary of State for External Affairs to allow him to table the document to which he referred. Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): It is so tabled. The House will now revert to the consideration of supply.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—SUGGESTED IMPOSITION OF SELECTED PRICE CONTROLS AND ROLLBACK OF UNJUSTIFIED PRICE INCREASES**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Grier:

That this House calls on the government to consider the immediate introduction of legislation designed to control selectively the prices of essential commodities and to give either to the government or to a prices review board the power to roll back unjustifiable price increases.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate rather unexpectedly. I am sure it is unexpected to the House and it is unexpected to me, but because of the absence of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) I have been asked in my capacity as Acting Minister of Finance, to respond to the motion put forward by the spokesman for the NDP. I also speak as a former minister of finance and, if I may add, as the reincarnation of a civil servant which I was and at which time I was intimately involved in wartime price