

consumers will once again return to their custom of spending at least 2.5% of their disposable income on beef. This pattern was quite constant from year to year with expenditures varying only from about 2.3% to 2.7% in 24 of the past 27 years.

However, in both 1976 and 1977, consumers spent only about 2.0% of their disposable income on beef while consuming record quantities. The price of beef was low.

Finally, in summary, *Beef Watch* had this to say:

The primary purpose of the *Beef Watch* program is to comment on the size of the national beef breeding herd. It is now evident that the high rate of female slaughter has reduced the herd to the point where domestic supplies will fall below 90 pounds per capita by 1980. It is our view that these levels are lower than optimum and represent some lost opportunities.

Further, the continuing high rate of female slaughter confirms that the herd reduction phase continues. As mentioned in the text, this process may now have proceeded too far. The retention of sufficient heifers and cows to permit a modest increase of 1½% to 2% in the breeding herd would help to restore a favorable demand/supply balance. Certainly a continued high rate of female slaughter is no longer necessary or justified.

That is a valuable comment and there are some lessons there which should be obvious to all of us, not just to the cattlemen themselves. Mr. Speaker, I want to draw these remarks to a conclusion. Here is an appropriate quotation from the current week's edition of *Agriweek* dated May 22, 1978. The "Backgrounder" column of that paper was commenting on the "inevitable cyclical nature of agriculture" and concluded with the following paragraph:

● (1422)

Understanding the cycles is the key, for both farmers and agribusiness, to the stability of individual enterprises, be they farms or businesses which exist to serve farmers. That would seem to be self-evident, yet there are few signs that these cycles are understood and properly respected. Far from devising ways to take advantage of cyclical conditions, the demands of most farm organizations and undoubtedly most farmers have been for their elimination, preferably by so convenient a means as government action. These agri-economic cycles will never be eliminated simply because their causes are beyond anyone's control. Every time government action comes to cope with conditions developing at a particular point in a cycle the inescapable result is a new and permanent government presence. And even the worst down-phase of the worst cycle ever seen is a poor excuse for that.

I say "amen" to that comment about government involvement, which attempts to tame beef cycles by legislation.

I said in my opening remarks that this is a package bill. There are some very good features in it, and I include in those the concept of the capital gains rollover provision for incorporated family farms and partnerships. In addition to that, of course, as announced yesterday, that includes incorporated small family businesses with that \$200,000 limit. That certainly deserves support.

However, the problems the Minister of Finance has got himself into over his provincial sales tax approach certainly merit the idea that this bill should be split. Then I think we would see some hasty action on both parts of the present bill.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, in taking part in the debate on this bill which results from the budget of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) I want to start off by saying that while lemmings have a bent for suicide, about once every seven years, and politicians sometimes have a

bent for suicide about every four years, I suppose one could make a case for at least trying to save the lemmings.

I and my colleagues in the New Democratic Party are not interested in assisting a Liberal government in actions which will assist in the suicide of our Confederation. We will not assist the government in playing into the hands of separatists and those who seek to break up our Confederation. We will not assist in the invasion by a national government into areas which are solely within the jurisdictions and prerogatives of the provinces. Unless and until agreement is reached between the national government and the provinces for changes in the jurisdictions of the provinces, the provinces have the sole rights in areas under their jurisdictions.

We have moved to amend this motion by asking for a one-month hoist. If the government were to accept our amendment, one month from today parliament would still be sitting, and the government could bring in an amended bill outlining agreements reached as a result of negotiations. Both the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Minister of Finance have said they are willing to negotiate, but they maintain an adamant, stubborn determination to proceed with the legislation in its present form.

When the government of my province of Saskatchewan brought down its budget, it incorporated measures aimed at stimulating the economy of the province which would also indirectly create employment in other provinces. I say, without blushing, that the budget brought down by the Saskatchewan government has been applauded in Saskatchewan by business, professional, and trade union circles. That budget has been applauded across the country.

In terms of numbers Saskatchewan is a small province, but I am proud to say that my province set an example and led the way, as usual. Our provincial budget has contributed to stimulating the Canadian economy. The provincial budget provided for provincial personal tax reductions amounting to \$52 million. Corporation taxes on small businesses were reduced by \$3 million. The budget provided a job creation strategy to create 5,800 new permanent and seasonal jobs.

The Saskatchewan provincial budget provided for revenue sharing with municipalities. This will provide an additional \$20 million for the municipalities of Saskatchewan so that they can hold down mill rates. It provided for an increase in property improvement grants to homeowners in Saskatchewan in the amount of \$4.5 million. It provided for a reduction of 5 per cent in automobile insurance rates, and it announced the intention of the Saskatchewan government to limit and hold down increases in utility rates, particularly for electricity and natural gas. The total benefit to our provincial economy amounts to \$82 million.

In addition to that we will be increasing employment in our little province by increasing capital expenditures by the government and by the Crown corporations of Saskatchewan by \$140 million, bringing expenditures to a total of \$834 million for the current year. Investment in assets has been enlarged, which will be of long-term benefit to the province but which will also, in the immediate future, provide additional employ-