

*Supply—Agriculture*

demand throughout the western hemisphere, including Europe. Holstein cattle exported from Canada in 1966 brought us \$15 million, and the figure may be even higher in 1967. The figures have not yet been completed for 1967, but in that year, 10,000 head of cattle was exported to countries other than the United States; 7,630 head to the United States; and 4,400 to Spain. One bull exported to Cuba brought \$100,000 in that year. Another bull exported to Japan brought \$75,000, and a third one exported to the United States brought \$140,000. I should like to point out to the minister that to a large degree the new regulations regarding federal show classifications are hampering the incentive of the Holstein-Friesian Association members to show their herds. Only about 25 per cent of the Holstein herds are on the record of performance testing. The federal government is not providing the money which would be necessary for a full program. As long as the present system is maintained, conditions will not improve. The government should consult our purebred cattle associations more than they do now. I am sure the minister will respond by a change in policy which will assist our purebred cattle associations and which will also be in our national interests. May I remind him again of the balance of trade to which this one organization has contributed so greatly.

In summing up the last point, may I say that the government should make every effort, through better incentive grants to fairs and exhibitions, to halt the decline in our exhibitions of dairy cattle.

I listened with interest to this debate, and I congratulate the members of the opposition who pointed out the lack of interest in and frequently the utter disregard of this government for Canadian agriculture. Why should the government be so stupid as to fail to recognize an asset when they have one? Whoever heard of a farmer asking for relief or handouts, no matter how tough conditions become for him at home? Although the percentage of people on the land is steadily diminishing and farmers now are in a minority among our blocks of occupational population, they are still key men in this country and agriculture continues to be our most important primary industry.

On Thursday of last week I took part in the debate on Bill No. C-197 to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act. As recorded at page 7137 of *Hansard*, I pointed out that the abandonment of agriculture in general by this

[Mr. Alkenbrack.]

government is one of the prime causes of the sudden creation of more unemployment in this country. This is a most pernicious situation. Unemployment in this country is now at its highest level in recent years, and it will get worse as this government continues to lose interest in agriculture and withhold assistance to it.

There are a good many secondary industries which depend on agricultural production in our country. I speak now of the canning industry which is of great importance in my riding. Prince Edward county in particular is the home of the Canadian canning industry and the home of the first vegetable canning factory in Canada operated years ago at Demorestville in Prince Edward county.

What is happening this year in the canning industry? The cause of our trouble in the tomato and canning industry lies in the unfair competition of the largely subsidized industries of foreign nations. Italy, for example, provides a subsidy amounting to 18 per cent to its tomato industry. How much do we subsidize our tomato growers? We do not subsidize them at all. I think it is time that this government smartened up, and that we as Canadians smartened up and did something to combat this unfair competition. We have a far better product than any grown in Italy or any other country. Our field grown tomatoes are second to none in the world.

• (9:00 p.m.)

I now wish to put on the record an article which substantiates my statements. This article under the heading "Cheap foreign food products hit farmers", appeared in the *Picton Gazette* for Wednesday, January 31, 1968, and I should like to quote it:

Competition from cheap food products from foreign countries will hit farmers, including local ones, this year, as well as canners.

At the annual meeting of local 213, Prince Edward Farmers Union at Cherry Valley hall Monday night, J. F. Hepburn, manager of Waupoos Canning and president of the Ontario Food Processors Association, outlined the problem caused by foreign competition in the food processing products area. Such products, he said, are imported into Canada tariff free and with substantial export subsidies, direct or hidden, from the country of origin.

"It is almost essential that we (the canning industry) make a reduction in tomato acreage of 30 to 35 per cent for the 1968 pack."

Mr. Hepburn cited fixed domestic market consumption figures to show that the reason is directly because of the increasing quantity of whole pack tomatoes being imported from such countries as Italy, Spain, South Africa, Portugal and other foreign countries. Bulgaria alone has tripled its