

that the concerns and interests of cattlemen had to be more actively pursued in committee by a member who was personally involved and dedicated to the total Canadian beef cattle industry. During my eight years in Parliament that particular assignment has been my principal responsibility. In this pursuit I was genuinely welcomed and made "at home" by various long-standing committee members from all parties. I appreciate that very much.

Indeed I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the understanding and patience of the chairman of that committee, the hon. member for Sarnia (Mr. Cullen). I first became acquainted with the hon. gentleman during the sittings of the committee which was considering special trends in food costs a number of years ago when he was its first and only chairman. I participated in that committee later on in its deliberations because it obviously did not have enough members representing agricultural producers. In addition, I appreciate the willingness of all members of that committee to listen to my arguments about the cattle industry as they relate to the Bank Act.

In particular, I mention the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Mr. Evans) and the wisdom and understanding of the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Mackasey). I must say I enjoyed his comments throughout the many meetings of that committee. Also I might mention the patience of the Minister of State for Finance in listening to the cattlemen's comments at those meetings. I would also mention the contributions of the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert). I should like to acknowledge the solid support of my fellow agricultural members on that committee—the hon. member for Lambton-Middlesex (Mr. Ferguson) and the hon. member for London-Middlesex (Mr. Bloomfield). These gentlemen have a very clear appreciation of the position of agricultural producers, especially those in the cattle industry.

During my attendance in committee I was involved in only two aspects of Bill C-6. The first was the automotive leasing sections as they related to chartered banks. I do not propose to comment further on that subject at this stage, since that portion of the bill has been covered in great depth and detail by many hon. members. I do not intend to add anything, though, of course, I made a comment or two during the committee consideration.

The second aspect is the "cattlemen's amendment" which to my mind was the most important subject. It is covered by two references in the bill, the first being under the marginal heading on pages seven and eight of the bill entitled: "Products of agriculture". This is a long overdue change in the definitions. Finally this clause includes the term "livestock" as a product of agriculture. I think it is incredible that livestock was not officially designated by definition as a product of agriculture up until now. Clause 2.(1)(b) reads as follows:

honey, livestock (whether alive or dead), dairy products, eggs and all other indirect products of the soil.

Bank Act

This clarification under "Definitions" is long overdue and very, very welcome. No further comment is necessary at this time.

The second reference to the "cattlemen's amendment" can be found on page 188 opposite the marginal notation "Priority of wages and money owing for perishable agricultural products". I particularly refer to clause 178(6)(b), subsections (i) and (ii) which deal with third party claims such as those by meatpackers and processors who have been able to use farm products which were procured, but not purchased, as security for their operating loans. The new act will allow a priority exemption indexed to the cost of production index from year to year, so that the upper limit of priority will grow with the change in circumstances. I want to emphasize that this is a big improvement over the old upper limit, which was \$7500; using this indexing formula it now works out to about \$100,000. That is indeed a significant improvement. Initially the cattlemen felt strongly that there should be an open-ended approach to this priority rating. They felt there should be no limitation whatsoever. While we reluctantly agreed to this approach I think it is fair to say that there was some unhappiness in the cattle industry as a result of settling for this.

● (1650)

I wish to refer now to section 6(b), the "Priority of wages and money owing for perishable agricultural products" section. It has already been referred to in debate and it says:

(b) claims of a grower or producer of products of agriculture for money owing by a manufacturer to the grower or producer for such products that were grown or produced by him on land owned or leased by him and that were delivered to the manufacturer during the period of six months next preceding the making of such order or assignment—

The point I wish to make and which I feel very strongly about is that while this is indeed an improvement over the old act, which has been very beneficial to the whole industry, there was a technical omission of just three words in the section I have just read. The three words which should be inserted, in my view, following the words "claims of a grower or producer" are "or his agent". Those words should be added. I ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance to give serious consideration adding those words to this amendment which presumably will be agreed to. This was put forward by the government during the various discussions in the committee stage. I think there is no question that if those words are not included there will be some hesitation on the part of country auction and commission firms who deal by word of mouth over the telephone and who make deals involving millions of dollars on behalf of cattle producers in particular. I think the phrase "or his agent" should be included as a technical amendment to the government amendment to which I have referred.

The cattle industry has been very understanding over the years despite serious losses suffered by cattle producers. The ones I remember best are bankruptcies of food processors, the bankruptcy of a packing plant in Ontario and another in western Canada, cases in which the producers' product—cattle—was held as security by the banks. This was used by