

best means to solve this problem. To that effect, we have received proposals from industrial milk-producers. We should like to protect Canadian producers against international market fluctuations and we shall look fully into all the proposals submitted to us.

Let us now examine the matter of the decreasing number of producers. One of the goals of our policy is to provide adequate supplies to meet the needs of the Canadian consumers. Shall we reach that goal? Necessarily, with more producers. We have already noted an upward trend in production in the last few months. The only way to understand the decline in the number of producers is to rely on figures. It is true that the number of producers has decreased in the last ten years, but one should not jump to conclusions too quickly.

As a matter of fact, there is a significant increase in newcomers. In 1971-72, 1,500 young people entered agriculture and 1,600 farmers' sons carried on the work of their father. In 1974-75, the number of beginners amounted to 3,000, that is twice as many as three years before, and 1,900 carried on the work of their father. You will agree with me that these figures are significant. Within three years, the number of beginners doubled. Is the increased interest of young people in agriculture not a guarantee for the future? Let us keep in mind that the decrease in the total number of producers is mainly due to age. Even at times when the price of milk was quite favourable, the number of producers kept decreasing. Now we must review the situation.

If the number of producers is on the decline, how is it that supplies remain about the same? The answer is quite simple: producers are more and more effective. In 1971-72, each producer delivered an average of 150,000 lbs. of industrial milk. Today, they are delivering about 175,000 lbs. Here again, figures speak for themselves.

In the general interest, we must promote an increase in the number of deliveries by producers. It is a means of improving the productivity and efficiency of the undertaking. A study made in 1971 on industrial milk production in Quebec and Ontario has shown it. It appears that the production costs for farmers who have cows giving an average of 6,000 to 8,000 pounds of milk are almost double those who have cows giving from 8,000 to 11,000 pounds of milk.

Some changes are now taking place indicating some progress. The decreased number of producers has given rise to the growth of the undertaking. For example, in 1966-67, 61 per cent of Canadian farmers were producing less than 100,000 pounds of milk per year and 2.6 were producing over 300,000 pounds. During the daily year 1974-75, only 31 per cent produced less than 100,000 pounds of milk and up to 14 per cent produced over 300,000 pounds.

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I know that it is useless to insist further, these figures are quite significant. Future will tell us the rest. The government does it utmost to offer an attractive income to encourage young people to get into farming. We offer not only grants and adjustment formulas but also improvement programs which have already give Canadian farmers the reputation they deserve. The development of dairy farms did not come by itself, nor overnight. Among other

#### *Milk Producers*

things, about \$3.5 million have been provided for the dairy control program and this is a program which Canada can be proud of. Since 1960, the annual yield per head increased by 300 pounds. The government is responsible for a good part of this increase. We encouraged the genetic improvement of dairy herds, notably through artificial insemination, the judicious choice of bulls, the upgrading and sound management of dairy farms. Free services are available to producers which enable them to increase their efficiency. I think that this new policy will put the industry back on the right track again and that the next few years will be for both producers and processors a period of stability and expansion.

I want to be clearly understood. I do not claim that the new policy will solve all the problems in the dairy industry. A policy can only provide for a framework enabling producers to make progress and to find by themselves solutions to the production and marketing problems. The government has been committed for a long time in the development of a comprehensive and long-term dairy policy. We have fulfilled our task completely. It is now up to the industry to assume its responsibilities and to contribute to the success of the dairy policy.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to put things straight on this motion.

**Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate the mover of the motion in view of the present situation, especially that of the last few days. I believe that this motion is most welcome. I therefore congratulate the mover and tell him that we have no hesitation in supporting a policy which would correspond much better than the present one to the aspirations and the needs of dairy producers. Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize the intervention of the Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Coriveau). Like the hon. member who spoke before him, he quoted very interesting statistics. He also talked about the efforts of the government as concerns agriculture.

To remain quite positive and objective, I would like to agree immediately with the fact that the government has made some efforts, that it has introduced several measures, and that it has been doing so for a long time, but this should not lead us to believe that the dairy industry is now in a comfortable position. Again, I would like to say that we would support measures aimed at providing stability and the necessary income to dairy producers.

Statistics may be quoted and we may be reminded of the measures introduced by the government, but it still remains that we cannot forget the present situation. This is the main issue. I believe that this is why the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beaudoin) found it appropriate to move this motion in view of the difficulties, and, I know perfectly well that our colleagues opposite are also aware of these difficulties. In closing, the Parliamentary Secretary mentioned that it is time for the dairy industry to take its responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the dairy industry has taken its responsibilities according to the programs introduced by the government through rather extraordinary modifications and massive investments, and we recognized this; the statistics prove it. Production has reached a very