

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, April 23, 1959

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

CONGRATULATIONS TO LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION ON ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTHDAY

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, while roses are usually associated with St. George's day, I rise, I hope with the unanimous consent of the house, to express to the Leader of the Opposition the warmest of felicitations coupled with the hope that health and happiness will be his during the years ahead.

(Translation):

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I trust hon. members will allow me to associate myself with the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) in extending to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) not only our congratulations but our best wishes on his birthday. On behalf of the members of this party—and I am sure all hon. members will want to join with me in doing so—I should like to wish him good health and many happy returns of the day. May I also express the hope that the youthful look that always seems to light up his face, will remain with him for a long time to come. I also add the usual wish: *Ad multos annos.*

(Text):

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, we in the C.C.F. are very happy to make the appropriate words of the Prime Minister and the hon. member for Laurier the unanimous expression of our best wishes to the Leader of the Opposition at this time.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am touched and very grateful to the Prime Minister, the leader of the C.C.F. party and my friend and colleague the member for Laurier, for their kind good wishes on this occasion. It is another evidence, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that personal friendships transcend party differences in this house. I am conscious of the fact—if I were not the Prime Minister reminded me—that this is also St. George's day, and I am also aware of the fact that St. George in his time killed the dragon.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, these anniversaries have their gloomy significance. This one reminds me that I am now only three years

away from the normal date of retirement on pension. If I were inclined, however, to get too gloomy over this reminiscence I am encouraged by the fact that the Prime Minister is even closer to that date.

AGRICULTURE

DAIRY PRODUCTS—STATEMENT ON PRICE STABILIZATION PROGRAM

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement on the price stabilization program for dairy products for the coming year.

A relatively small surplus in the production of milk in Canada has been going chiefly into the manufacture of skim milk powder. The result has been that a very considerable amount has accumulated in the hands of the stabilization board. During the last calendar year, 1958, production of this product totalled approximately 187 million pounds, of which 103.3 million pounds was surplus to domestic requirements and purchased by the stabilization board. Present board holdings approximate 62 million pounds. The useful life of skim milk powder is limited; thus it is a product which cannot be stored and held indefinitely.

There have been only two means of disposal open to us during the past year, sale as feed and turning over as gifts to international relief agencies. From time to time we sold as feed our older powder as it became apparent that if we did not do so the powder would soon deteriorate and become unusable. The disposal of surplus dry skim milk powder has created very serious problems, particularly in international trade. We offered 30 million pounds of this powder as gifts to international relief agencies in January of 1958. To date only 18.8 million pounds of this have been taken.

In view of the impossibility of selling any considerable quantities of skim milk powder on foreign markets and of the limited amount which can be disposed of as gifts, it is apparent that our production of skim milk powder must be reduced. The support program for dairy products for the dairy year commencing May 1 has been designed to cut down production of skim milk powder and increase production and consumption of cheese and the production of other dairy products such as casein.

The agriculture stabilization board has been authorized to support dairy products