

Oral Questions

it was attempting to do was to create unjustified fear on the part of residents of Saskatchewan.

• (1450)

These fears are unjustified and it is unfortunate the hon. gentleman should foster those himself.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, if indeed they are unjustified, perhaps the minister could stand in the House today and tell us that while he is the Minister of National Health and Welfare there will not be a return to user fees in this country, there will not be a return to extra billing in this country. Can he stand in his place today, if he is so convinced that he is not in favour of privatization of health care, and make that commitment to Canadians?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who is health critic for his party should be aware of the provisions of the Canada Health Act, which are quite explicit on this matter.

This is exactly the same party that went around Canada during the last election campaign trying to scare the sick, the elderly, and the poor by telling them they were going to lose their benefits. It was false then and it is false now.

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[Translation]

DAIRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Agriculture and concerns dairy producers in my riding who disagree with the Canadian Dairy Commission's recommendation to keep the target price of milk at its present level. They claim that this conclusion was reached by the Commission because of a change in methodology.

Could the minister give the House and the producers the assurance that uniform and compatible methods and procedures for data collection will be used, so as to reach a decision that is fair to all concerned?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his

interest in the matter. My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I asked the task force to look into the whole dairy question. Mr. Speaker, our long-term dairy policy expires next year, and we are making sure it will be renewed and will be fair to dairy producers across Canada. With respect to the specific point raised by the hon. member, it is clear there is some difference of opinion about calculation methods.

That being said, my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I have asked an independent agency, an independent audit firm to look at these figures. They are to report on the matter around the middle of June. At that time we will consider the report and see what transpires. However, I can give the hon. member the assurance that we will continue to co-operate very closely with dairy producers in order to get the best possible deal for them, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

TRADE

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

In the last four years this government has allowed subsidized U.S. steel to more than double its share of the Canadian market from 4.5 per cent to 10 per cent, while at the same time the Canadian share of the U.S. market has hovered around its traditional 3 per cent.

We all know that the U.S. has created an informal trade barrier by applying countervail every time our exports in the U.S. climb above three percentage points.

How can the minister honestly say that we have free trade in steel when these practices are still occurring?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, we have not allowed U.S. steel companies to do anything. It is up to U.S. steel companies to do whatever they can to sell their product in any part of the world that has a free market, such as we do, or are members of the GATT system.

They are quite entitled to sell in Canada, just as we are entitled to sell into the United States. If any private Canadian firm has a complaint against a U.S. steel company alleging that it is receiving trade distorting subsidies or whatever, the company can go to the appropriate tribunal here and lay a complaint. It can lay