

Dairy Policy

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Caron (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that motion No. 7 be dealt with and that the three previous motions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Caron) suggests that we immediately proceed with the consideration of notice of motion No. 7 appearing in the name of the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Tessier) and that notices of motions Nos. 2, 4 and 5 be allowed to stand with the unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent to allow notices of motions Nos. 2, 4 and 5 to stand so that the House may proceed with notice of motion No. 7 appearing in the name of the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Tessier)?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[English]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): By unanimous consent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to stand motions Nos. 2, 4 and 5 so that the House can proceed with motion No. 7.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

● (1722)

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTIONS

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE**SUGGESTED PUBLISHING OF MARKETING QUOTAS OF MILK BY CANADIAN DAIRY COMMISSION**

Mr. Claude Tessier (Compton) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of having the Canadian Dairy Commission publish the marketing quotas of the milk produced by all Canadian milk producers.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the request in today's motion to publish the marketing quotas of the milk produced by all Canadian milk producers has already been made by the Quebec Liberal caucus and was even referred to the House by the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and member for Beauce (Mr. Caron). This request was justified in the past and seems even more justified today particularly at the very outset of what could be the third great war of milk producers.

Of course, legal advisers may object on the ground that farm producers' incomes should not be disclosed, but the motion asks that a study be made into the advisability of

publishing marketing quotas for all milk producers in Canada, more particularly over the last four dairy years, namely 1974-75, 1975-76, 1976-77, 1977-78. I am even prepared to recommend that this list of producers be made available only to members of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and that they be given the opportunity to question witnesses as they see fit in order to clear up things and brief the producers themselves who are the first people to be concerned with this matter.

Refusing to make these quotas public or rationalizing our opposition would amount to our entering the conspiracy of silence which would lead to a distortion of the Canadian milk policy through all kinds of tricks. Are there any reasons for such a request? Mr. Speaker, our policy in Canada is undoubtedly the best in the world, we can vouch for it but we cannot accept to have it distorted because it will remain the best possible policy only in so far as the support price can provide the producers with a guaranteed income and this guarantee is a real one.

● (1732)

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, between 1967 and 1975 the dairy policy had the incentive effects that were being sought. On the other hand, in 1975-76 we had to realize that an overproduction was becoming totally unacceptable. That is why in 1976-77 the federal government had to ask the federations to agree to drastic cuts so as to be able to bring Canadian production in line with Canadian needs. It appears that things should be back to normal in 1977-78. However, the instruments have to be reconsidered and it should again be restated that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) has the duty to determine Canadian needs and to ensure that Canadian production is directly in line with Canadian production.

The management committee, for its part, is responsible for ensuring that production is in line with Canadian needs. In such a system, theoretically the quota system allots and imposes quotas on every producer. This is a power and a duty to produce but, on the other hand, it should also be a guarantee for the producer. As far as the government, the cabinet, the Minister of Agriculture, the Canadian Dairy Commission, Agriculture Canada and the management committee are concerned, the present system is not only valid but is the instrument we must have and use properly so as to give our policy the effects we would want it to have.

Indeed, between 1967 and 1975, there was a real increase in Canadian production, and at that time the policy reached the objective that our Canadian production was more in line with Canadian production so that in fact that incentive and that lack of dependence on foreign markets had been corrected since they were the reasons why the policy had been put in place in 1967. In 1975-76, when the minister had clearly established that Canadian needs were 100 million hundredweight, we saw at the end of the dairy year that production had effectively been 112 million hundredweight and furthermore, we saw that at that time production quotas were around 136 million at the beginning of 1975-76. So the management