

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

As the purpose of the government's 1970-1971 dairy policy was to bring about a decrease of dairy production, is the minister in a position to tell us today whether this objective has been reached in part and if so, whether the situation of industrial dairy producers can be expected to improve in the near future?

[English]

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, there has been a very substantial improvement in the balance between production and consumption in Canada, as well as an improvement in the sale of some surplus commodities in the international market.

[Translation]

DAIRY POLICY—RE-ESTABLISHMENT
OF SUBSIDIES

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Considering the important number of milk producers who have abandoned the dairy industry owing to the decrease in subsidies, would the minister be prepared to announce that he will do away with this form of penalization in the near future?

[English]

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the government has made the comment many times that the amendment of our policy is designed to improve the income of those people who are in the dairy industry as well as to be helpful in making adjustments respecting the numbers of people in the industry. I think we can look back with some satisfaction on the improvement that has been made during the past few months.

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask another supplementary question.

Considering that nearly 16 to 20 per cent of the dairy producers in my area have withdrawn from the market, could the minister tell us exactly how many producers have been eliminated since he announced his dairy policy?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is asking for statistical information. I do not think that his question is in order.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ABDUCTION OF SENIOR BRITISH TRADE
COMMISSIONER—ROLE OF RCMP
IN INVESTIGATION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It has to do with the matter that he brought before the House this afternoon. In view of the diabolical nature of the crime which will give Canada a black eye internationally unless immediate action is taken to bring about the arrest and conviction of the wrongdoers, would the minister consider mobilizing, with the assistance of the Montreal police and also the Quebec provincial police, all experienced members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from across Canada so that there will be the fullest and immediate action taken? The Mounted Police always get their man.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to reassure the right hon. gentleman that the RCMP are mobilizing all their talents in this particular case, and I thank him for his expression of confidence in the force.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, while I realize that security and the need for secrecy are of importance during an investigation such as this, is the minister in a position at this time to say, on the basis of the investigation that has already taken place, that early arrests may be expected or anticipated?

Mr. Sharp: No, Mr. Speaker, I regret that I could not give that statement. I will certainly make an announcement as soon as arrests have been made, but I cannot say anything about that matter until that time.

AGRICULTURE

PROHIBITION OF INTERPROVINCIAL MARKET-
ING—EFFECT OF BILL C-197—REFERENCE
TO SUPREME COURT

Mr. H. W. Danforth (Kent-Essex): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the present disruption in Canadian agriculture as a result of the interruption of normal trade patterns by the recent action of some provincial governments and the grave doubts now expressed by them that Bill C-197 could ever provide a solution, does the government