

Supply—Agriculture

port action. The question has been asked on several occasions. The telegram reads as follows:

L. E. Cardiff, M.P.
Ottawa

Blyth, Ont.

At a protest meeting of representatives of the unit holders of Blyth farmers co-operative association a request for immediate action on cheese price was made. A price comparable with other milk prices cannot be paid for cheese milk while selling cheese on the export market and we will be forced to make coloured cheese for the domestic market if something is not done immediately. Please reply.

Blyth farmers co-operative association.

I was not under the impression that coloured cheese was not being requisitioned. Is it a fact that coloured cheese is not requisitioned for Great Britain? Can something not be done to increase the price for cheese that is being requisitioned for the old country, so that the cheese milk price will compare favourably with the price now being paid for concentrated milk?

Mr. Robert McCubbin (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture): In respect to the inquiry of the hon. member for Brant-Wentworth, may I say that I saw a copy of the telegram from Blyth that he has just read. I understand full well the position of the cheese producers of western Ontario. Nevertheless the representatives of the cheese producers and the trade were down here in April and they asked the Minister of Agriculture at that time to requisition cheese so that the contract they held with the United Kingdom might be filled. That was done. I too am well aware of the fact that the concentrated milk people are taking some of the milk that formerly went into the production of cheese.

On the question whether anything will be done to put the price a little higher f.o.b. seaboard or f.o.b. factory, I am of the opinion that probably something should be done and a higher price paid to the cheese producers in western Ontario. But that is a matter of government policy which is being discussed, and I hope that an announcement will be made in the near future.

Mr. Charlton: The parliamentary assistant did not answer my question with regard to coloured cheese.

Mr. McCubbin: If my memory serves me right I did not think that coloured cheese was requisitioned, but it is a fact that cheese is requisitioned. Whether you can sell coloured cheese without a permit, I am not in a position to say.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): Under this requisition order the deal was made last

[Mr. Charlton.]

April, but circumstances alter cases. The government has changed its attitude from time to time as conditions change. Therefore it seems to me that if the situation is such that one particular line of produce of a dairy industry is going to be penalized to provide cheese for Britain when the other producers are selling whole milk, concentrated milk, and the like, and are going to get a higher price than the man who is maintaining the export market not only now but in the years that lie ahead by being penalized to the extent of about 50 cents a pound something should be done. I am hoping that the parliamentary assistant—I realize what he said a day or two ago in response to my question, and what he has just said—will be in a position to make an announcement very very shortly.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

657. Departmental administration—further amount required, \$44,728.

Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): I regret that I shall have to take a little time to read a statement which has been prepared for delivery for some hours. This is the item on which I might read it.

For some time the government has given consideration to the complex external factors which have led to a serious decline in post-war immigration to Canada. These factors were examined in the light of the basic principles of government policy.

Hon. members have stated that there was and is widespread public support for the immigration policy announced on May 1, 1947, by the prime minister of the day.

It is significant that no one has questioned the soundness of the principles of the immigration policy pursued by the government since that time. Today, three years after it was formulated, and in spite of changing circumstances at home and abroad, the principles of the policy announced by the former prime minister remain unchallenged and, I believe command the confidence of the Canadian people.

These principles will bear repetition. Canada is to foster the growth of its population by the encouragement of immigration through legislation and vigorous administration to ensure the careful selection and permanent settlement of such numbers of immigrants as can be advantageously absorbed in the national economy. Immigration, however, must not have the effect of altering the fundamental character of the Canadian population.