

what kinds of potatoes we could supply. We know we can supply the kinds of potatoes they want; we know the kinds they want. We know we will have to plant potatoes here which we can guarantee to be disease-free.

I cannot give the member the answers he is requesting tonight that quickly, but I could have them for him tomorrow in a more detailed form when we resume consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Market risk insurance is included in the program. We are participating in that with the producers and the provinces. The provinces have been told that we must move on this. We have met with the provincial deputy minister of Prince Edward Island on this subject. The provinces want research and development, the hon. member wants research and development. These are being co-ordinated with the program through the food production inspection branch in Ottawa. It is a split-up program. We do not make excuses for it. The hon. member has said, "You are not doing enough", and when we move, he says, "You are doing too much". I do not understand.

Mr. McCain: The questions I have asked have not necessarily denounced the problem totally, but does the minister understand the costs he has imposed? Obviously he does not.

What will happen to the general trading relations which have existed between Canada and the United States, for example, without whose supply consumers will not have any potatoes? The processing industry will not have any potatoes for the summertime because they can neither be stored nor produced for that purpose in Canada at this time. Perhaps research will develop a system whereby we can, but there are problems associated with it.

I fully appreciate that there has been discussion between the minister in Ottawa and the ministers in the individual provinces. There is no question about that, but my information is that some of the agreements which were achieved were not necessarily kept in full as the federal government proceeded after the regulations were made. However, I will not go into that aspect at the moment.

Will the minister commit himself to getting and publicizing the per acre costs imposed by this change? I want him to find out what has been the results of tests conducted on Canadian seed versus Dutch seed or European seed of any kind in the foreign markets which Atlantic Canada is now supplying. The answer he will receive is that Atlantic seed potatoes which were planted in test plots in an international competition are indeed showing better results in the last year than the tests on the seeds of other competitors. The minister mentioned Holland. Holland at the moment is experiencing a cyclical problem which we have been experiencing for the last five years. Are they, in fact, able to comply with the regulations themselves? That is the argument we must put forward. Can they, in fact, comply themselves with the regulations which we have imposed here? They are exposed to table production and to the flight of insects from one jurisdiction to another, as is Atlantic Canada, as is any other agricultural area in Canada. I think

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the answers to these questions are pertinent to the potato industry.

The Chairman: I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

● (2130)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dubois: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to participate tonight in the debate on the estimates of the Department of Agriculture and on the dairy policy announced last summer, and then to comment on the situation in the province of Quebec, and to show how Quebec milk producers benefit from the Canadian dairy policy.

As of August 1, 1980, the price of industrial milk was raised from \$14.68 to \$15.26 a hundredweight, that is 3.9 per cent more. Hon. members know that the last increase had been announced on April 1, 1980. Worthy of consideration at the time was the fact the support price paid by the Canadian Dairy Commission for butter went up to \$1.592 a pound. That is a raise of 8 cents a pound.

As a member coming from a rural area of Quebec, I noted particularly that the minister had announced the Government of Canada would pay \$2.66 a hundredweight for industrial milk produced for the domestic market and for the export program.

My colleagues from Quebec and those from other provinces will remember that at their last convention in Winnipeg Quebec Liberal members had endorsed an important resolution to have the support price for industrial milk maintained at \$2.66 a hundredweight. Quebec industrial milk producers thought it was a highly significant factor and it had to be maintained. Effectively, after legislation had been passed, the Canadian Dairy Commission and the department announced that the price would be maintained.

What must be noted in my opinion is that the requirements of the domestic market as established by the Canadian Milk Supply Management Committee were still at 100 million hundredweight even though it was felt at the time that the supply could increase during the dairy year.

The government thus authorized higher export quotas, from three to five million hundredweight. Given the situation of the dairy policy, it can be said that we in Canada have a somewhat particular situation.

My colleague from Chicoutimi was saying a few moments ago that the food basket costs less here than in other countries. He was absolutely right because I have here a table from the U.S. Department of Agriculture showing that in Canada, in U.S. dollars, the same food basket costs \$55.56 as opposed to \$58.02 in the United States. The other countries included in the comparisons are Australia, the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, Italy, The Netherlands, West Germany, Argentina,