

● (4:40 p.m.)

I hope that the reference in the Throne Speech to the guaranteed minimum income will not be an empty one and that this objective will be achieved.

It is precisely what the Ralliement Cr ditiste has been suggesting for years. But governments have turned a deaf ear to these proposals. Again, last week, we moved a subamendment inviting the government to increase family allowances; that would have a direct effect in helping families, since Canada is able to do it, keeping in mind the tremendous production in store and the great number of unemployed who are ready to produce more.

This proposal has been voted on in this House, and the two traditional parties have joined to vote against an increase in family allowances. I wonder then whether they lack logic and sincerity.

Agriculture in Quebec is experiencing serious difficulties. Industrial milk producers are operating in trying conditions. Indeed, I have been told once that truly good producers do not need to be subsidized by the government to operate at a reasonable profit.

Nevertheless, following the visit paid by the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on September 20th to Mr. Reeb, a St-Gr goire farmer, in the constituency of Nicolet, the magazine *La terre de chez nous* reported this incident:

Mr. Reeb admitted to the Prime Minister that out of a yearly net income of \$4,800, subsidies accounted for some \$4,500.

I believe that he was exaggerating or else the journalist erroneously reported the figures. Anyhow, he was not exaggerating when he said that his net income was \$4,800. This is a necessary minimum. However, I believe it is untrue to say that the subsidies amount to \$4,500. I now resume the quotation:

Needless to say that a cut in the subsidies would mean bankruptcy for me. I have been here for ten years only. You could tell me to turn to other types of farming; of course, there is the sugar-beet, about which I know a little, but this product is even more subsidized than milk, and you will not see me get into that—And what about cattle, said the Prime Minister?

It is a proven fact that cattle requires three times as much capital, and it takes seven years to get something out of it—

It will take me all my life. At the present time, I put back every penny I save. I have 20 years of experience in the dairy industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed true that we could progressively get the industrial milk producers who have to leave that field for well-known reasons into other kinds of production. Perhaps it would be wise to interest some of them in sheep-breeding. Judging from an advertisement published in *La Presse* on October 14, 1970, and sponsored by Steinberg's, there would be room on the Canadian meat market for a larger quantity of lamb.

The advertisement read as follows:

Spring lamb from New Zealand. Why is lamb such a good buy?

You can find out in *La Presse* under date of October 14, 1970. Those people can afford to advertise like that. They are going to sell lots of New Zealand lamb. But the

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producers of industrial milk, with their small income of \$3.60 per hundredweight, cannot afford such advertising, so the consumers forget about the milk producers.

In my constituency of Bellechasse, such breeding could be done very successfully.

I suggest that the government should seriously consider the possibility of promoting that industry which could use the farms which have been or will soon be abandoned, if the policy is not amended.

Is the government really serious when proposing its farm policy? We saw last year that a petition bearing the signature of 25,000 producers of manufactured milk was handed to the government in the House. I signed it myself. In that request, the petitioners asked that an emergency debate be held on the government dairy policy. When the session came to a close, the government had not dealt with that petition even if on several occasions I had reminded the House Leader of it.

It might be said that an emergency debate was held on the situation of milk producers. I admit it, but this was done through a motion from the member for Bellechasse. However, the 25,000 petitioners keep asking, when they meet us, whether their petition will be considered in a serious debate likely to improve the situation.

And I always tell them the truth, I hope, when I say that their petition has been introduced in the House and that one of these days, they may be able to see the results.

In any event, I know full well that industrial milk producers have made more than reasonable attempts to reduce their production, and at this stage, I would like to bring the fact to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) who is responsible for the dairy policy. A great many of them have met the requirement of the government, but I beg for mercy for those who remain in the dairy industry. Better prices should be guaranteed to them so as to increase their income and allow them to meet their obligations. I shall take up the subject again when we consider the estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

There are also possibilities for industrial development in my area and I am asking the government to see that the requests for subsidies made by those who do not hesitate to extend their facilities or by those who have enough initiative to create new industries are processed as quickly as possible, as this would create employment.

Yet, this is a very simple thing. In fact, the legislation exists, the estimates have been passed. On behalf of the industry I put the question: Why does it take so long to consider a request, to give an answer or to pay subsidies?

I also ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) to assure me that the town of Montmagny, presently in difficulties because of its large number of unemployed, be designated as a special area so as to enable the municipal authorities to carry out urgent public works projects and provide employment for the excessive number of unemployed in that locality.