

able to move to delay the date of the increase an extra 45 days. However, a number of minor companies, which represent an important competitive factor in the market, hold much less than average inventories. It would clearly be impossible to vary price increase dates by company or regionally. There is a need to find a common denominator.

In view of the foregoing, the government has decided that a compromise must again be struck on the basis of an assumed product working inventory of 45 days. This 45-day delay allows a reasonable degree of protection for consumers without unduly penalizing the sellers.

AGRICULTURE—INDUSTRIAL MILK—REQUEST FOR
RECONSIDERATION OF LEVY

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Madam Speaker, daily for the last five days the matter of the 100 per cent increase in the levy on industrial milk producers for powdered milk has been raised in this House. During those five days the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) chose to answer the question on one occasion and either refused to answer on other occasions or was missing from the House. I should like to document very briefly those five occasions.

In the first instance my colleague, the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. LaSalle), asked the minister about this on July 22. The minister acknowledged he had received briefs from certain farm organizations and that they contained some suggestions worthy of consideration. On the following day my same colleague, the hon. member for Joliette, tried to move a motion under Standing Order 43 which would have required this House to debate the issue. This was turned down by government members.

On the following day, July 24, the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack), also a colleague of mine, raised the same question, and this time it was answered by the Acting Minister of Agriculture who said he would take it as notice.

On July 25, in private members' hour, a motion was brought forward by the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beaudoin) suggesting that there should be an investigation by the government of industrial milk producers. This motion was talked out by the government so that it could not come to a vote.

Finally, for the fifth day the question was again raised by the hon. member for Hastings (Mr. Ellis), and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) chose not to answer it because he had answered it previously. On the second occasion I tried to ask a question, but Mr. Speaker turned me down because it had been asked previously.

I want to conclude by asking three questions which the parliamentary secretary can answer, I think, in his three minutes without difficulty. But before I do so I want to allude first of all to his rather extensive speech on the occasion of a private member's motion last Friday. It seemed to me that he began to speak in a confident manner. I should like to quote him from page 7959 of *Hansard* when he said the following:

I should like to clear up the situation with regard to the dairy policy.

This seemed to be a final statement once and for all. Then he went on to describe how the minister, in consultation with the Canadian Dairy Commission and the

Adjournment Debate

Canadian dairy farmers, had come up with a price adjustment formula which gave rise to the figure of \$11.2 to underwrite the cost of industrial milk in Canada as of last April 1. Then he went on to discuss the export situation and how the price in Canada had been affected by the fact that subsidies by European governments had lowered the cost of powdered milk from abroad to a point where we in Canada were in difficulty in trying to make sales.

Once again the parliamentary secretary went on as follows, as recorded at page 7960 of *Hansard*:

You know our department is much interested in exportation. We always tried to find new markets for Canadian products.

Then the parliamentary secretary went on to discuss the problem of the decreasing number of producers of industrial milk. He described how the number of farmers producing industrial milk had gone down but said that this was compensated for by the fact that new farmers were coming in as well as farmers' sons who were taking on the job. He alluded to the fact that productivity and efficiency had gone up, and he illustrated this by saying that there was a 16 per cent increase since 1971-1972 in the amount of milk produced by industrial milk producers. He did not say that the reward these producers received for their increased efficiency and productivity was a cut back of between \$1,500 and \$2,500 on the basis of this new levy, or a 10 per cent increase on industrial milk.

Finally, the parliamentary secretary concluded his speech in a grandiose and incredible manner with the following sentences as recorded at page 7961 of *Hansard*, as follows:

The government has been committed for a long time in the development of a comprehensive and long-term dairy policy. We have fulfilled our task completely. It is now up to the industry to assume its responsibility and to contribute to the success of the dairy policy.

I would like to close by asking the following three questions: first, what specific attempts have been made by the government to expand exports of Canadian powdered milk? Second, acknowledging the financial bind in which young dairy farmers now find themselves, having committed themselves to bank loans based on the \$11.2 price promised them in April and taken away on July 1, what help will the government give these farmers? Third, since the parliamentary secretary has said the Department of Agriculture has fulfilled its task completely, is it then refusing to accept the challenge of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture to try to develop a policy of funding for export products that will provide stability to industrial milk producers?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Léopold Corriveau (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I think the Minister of Agriculture has had the opportunity to answer that very same question several times recently, but I am pleased to answer it once again tonight.

We have all agreed for a long time on the importance and the special character of the dairy sector of Canadian agriculture. As in many other countries, the Canadian dairy industry is subject to a price control system. The government therefore has resorted to various ways of regulating production. Our programs have had a deep