

*Supply*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. La Salle:** Mr. Chairman, I can appreciate that the minister would give me the same reply as earlier. I do not want to alarm the producers or the Canadian population. My question is very simple. The dairy farmers of Canada hope and wish the minister will maintain this formula pricing. They said so, as the minister is well aware. I simply wanted to ask the minister if he could tell me what he will be able to do for them. Will he maintain this formula pricing this year, at least for some time? I do not know. However, I believe the minister could tell me.

I know that this formula has had good results since 1975. I know all that, but dairy farmers would like to know whether the minister can guarantee that this formula will be maintained and for how long, or at least, I imagine that they would like to be reassured that this formula will still be applied in 1981. If the minister can provide further reassurance, so much the better for dairy farmers. In other words, I am asking the same question once again. Can the minister tell us whether this formula will be maintained in 1981?

[*English*]

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Chairman, yes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. La Salle:** This reply is very satisfactory, Mr. Chairman. I really like a minister who can provide such answers. I would like to note, Mr. Chairman, that after the contribution made by certain members yesterday, I also had the opportunity to ask certain questions of the minister about the subsidy for pork producers, who include pig fatteners and weaner pig producers. One of the members, I do not remember which one, either the member for Champlain or the member for Chicoutimi, mentioned the delays in receiving these subsidies. I do not want to ask any question of the minister about this, but I simply want to say that I have also received complaints in this regard and I imagine that, after hearing the comments made by my colleagues opposite, the minister will take some action to try to reduce the waiting period for pork producers as concerns the subsidies. Of course, I am happy that the minister has reacted to the representations made concerning the situation of pork producers.

There is another question I would like to bring to the attention of the minister, Mr. Chairman. I have read today in the newspaper that there is a surplus of maple syrup. Perhaps maple syrup producers would be interested in learning whether the minister is aware of this surplus, which is of particular concern to Quebec, as it seems that it could mean losses for producers who would have to store surplus syrup. Moreover, according to the international institute, there seems to be a budget problem for promoting maple syrup. Could the minister throw some light on the subject today?

Is the department prepared to increase allocations for promoting maple syrup? Could the minister tell us whether he

would be willing to recommend a moderate budget for promotional purposes so that the producers and the association can dispose of this surplus and also of the maple syrup production they will have in a few months? Perhaps the minister could throw some light on the situation for the information of maple syrup producers.

For the moment, the one who is wasting the time of the House is the minister. He is robbing me of my allotted time.

[*English*]

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Chairman, we are aware that producers in *la belle province* had a very good crop of maple syrup last year. We are trying to find figures for the hon. member, but we give producers interest-free advance payments for their maple syrup so that they can properly supply the market. I am not aware whether there is a problem at the present time in marketing the product. I understand it was of high quality. It was on the market at a fairly good price. We advance the moneys so that the producers do not have to sell their product in a distressed market, so that the product does not have to seek a home on the market and so that speculators are not able to take advantage of the maple syrup producers.

We do not have the figure in front of us at this time, but I have received no representations from maple syrup producers in the last few months to my knowledge, so I am taking for granted that things are going as they had projected and hoped. If the hon. member has any information which is contrary to that, I would be pleased to have it, but I have not received any representations along those lines from the official organization representing maple syrup producers.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. La Salle:** Mr. Chairman, according to a press release I have here from the International Institute of Maple Syrup Producers—which the parliamentary secretary will no doubt provide him with—there is four times more maple syrup than usual for this time. Under the circumstances, it seems to me that that surplus creates a problem. Perhaps we should consider an advertising campaign and perhaps the minister could ask his officials to look into the possibility of selling a part of this maple syrup outside the country.

But my time is going fast, Mr. Chairman, and I also want to voice to the minister my main concern regarding this sector and that is the question of younger producers who are expected to carry on. We must recognize that this industry is healthier today than before and we have reason to be optimistic, but we must also recognize, as others have indicated, that considering the cost of farms, it is difficult nowadays, even though the lending facilities are there, for a young would-be farmer to buy a farm because of the interest rate, which is also true for other areas. Interest rates represent a prohibitive cost and jeopardize the future of farming for the younger generations. They can also discourage the young from going into debt because there are years when production is not so good. I do not have any solutions to propose to the minister but I would ask him to