

Dairy Policy

to come here again this year through snow and ice to try to refresh the Minister's mind, who says he did not keep his promise or respect the undertakings he made last year. The best proof that the government did not respect its commitments, is that the farmers are here today. They march this way every year, and I am tired of that, Mr. Speaker. This is the social group which still works the hardest at the present time, which has always worked the hardest and which has to beg most to get its small share. Yet, no one seems to pay attention to them, because we are told that farmers are not that important anymore in our society nowadays since there are few of them, and their number is decreasing.

I am amazed, Mr. Speaker. I was recently making this comment to farmers: the more we vote Liberal, the more we are in the red; the more we vote Liberal, the deeper we are in debts, the more we vote Liberal, the greater is our deficit. What do the farmers want?

Mr. Fortin: The more we are Liberal, the poorer we get!

Mr. Rondeau: The more we are Liberal, the poorer we get indeed. What do farmers want, in short? They are at present suggesting that in order to stabilize the whole dairy industry in 1976-77, all that is needed in the matter of investments by the federal government for the coming year, is an amount of \$40 to \$50 million. Concerning those \$40 or \$50 million, Mr. Speaker, there is no need to make such a big fuss nor to make a very long speech. The hon. member for Compton (Mr. Tessier) could not understand that—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Clermont): Order, please. The time allotted to the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau) has now expired. He may only proceed with the unanimous consent of the House.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Clermont): Order. The hon. member started to speak at five twenty-four, and I have already given him more than one minute extra.

Mr. Rondeau: I thank you for that—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Clermont): Order. I asked unanimous consent of the House; it was not granted. The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom).

[*English*]

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I want to say first of all that I shall be brief because my colleague from Battle River (Mr. Malone) wishes to say a few words. I will endeavour to divide the remaining time between the two of us. I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) for introducing this motion. I believe it is very important. I cannot help but comment at this time that I am sure all of us have noticed in our gallery today we have many dairy farmers who have remained here late on Friday afternoon to listen to this debate. I think this is unprecedented. It shows the importance of this debate in the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Mr. Rondeau.*]

Mr. Nystrom: It also shows that they are very concerned about this issue.

[*Translation*]

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I come from Saskatchewan and I have been speaking French for only a very short time—

[*English*]

I beg the tolerance of those people in the gallery from Quebec in respect of my speaking in English in this debate. I want to make clear on behalf of our party that we support vigorously the principle of orderly marketing. We believe farmers must have orderly marketing if they are to plan their production and have a guaranteed income. They must have this if they are to plan for their livelihood and the livelihood of their families.

Our party believes in a system of supply management. We also know that when we have supply management, such as we are moving into in respect of some products in this country, there are bound to be problems which all of us will have to face, not just the federal government but the producers and the various provinces. When we look at a system of supply management that is giving the farmers hopefully a higher income we must also look at the cost of that product to some of the lower income Canadians.

Earlier in the debate today my colleague from Timiskaming mentioned the possibility of a school milk program and the supplementation of the cost of milk or of the price of milk to the consumers at the lower retail end. I think that is something we as a nation should examine. It makes me quite ill to go into schools and see coke and pop machines, but very little milk being consumed by the students. I think that is something the government should look at seriously in terms of the new endeavour. I know it cannot all be done by the federal government. I thought I made that point clear on many occasions in this House.

We have an over-production of milk in this country this year, a real over-production of skim milk powder. Some of that now is being sold by the Canadian Dairy Commission at a price as low as 14 cents a pound in Europe. I want to suggest I do not think the subsidy for that should be coming strictly from the dairy farmers of this country. The CDC pays 54 cents a pound for that milk. Some of it will be sold for 14 cents a pound. I think when there is a problem of over-supply which is not the fault of the farmers, and the produce has to be sold for a lower price, the farmers should not have to bear the entire cost of that bill. The larger part of it should come from the people of Canada collectively. The government should buy the surplus milk and sell it itself for 14 cents a pound rather than have it done by the Canadian Dairy Commission. I think that would be a much more equitable way to approach a problem like this.

I also want to say that as a country we should look at the entire world situation. It irks me, and I am sure it irks most Canadians to see an overproduction of food in this country and to see simultaneously millions of people going hungry every night in this world, and many more people starving today than five or ten years ago. We have over-production of food in a certain area and cannot get rid of that food. I know there are reasons why food cannot find its own way to hungry bodies and hungry bellies, but I am