

To balance production and consumption prices and to enable the consumers to purchase milk at a reasonable price, the government should grant a compensated discount of 10 cents a quart on milk sold for fluid consumption, which would bring the price down to a reasonable level without reducing the producers' profits.

It will be remembered that, at the beginning of the 40's, a subsidy was granted on fluid milk. This had allowed an increase in the income of dairy farms and had promoted a greater consumption.

The minister will perhaps answer that this will cost many millions of dollars, but I would point out that consumers need milk, that it is produced that production could be increased. If the minister is short of credit, he needs only to turn to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) and ask him to open the doors of the Bank of Canada. Thus, he will not have to levy new taxes. I will remind the minister that we give every year many millions of dollars to underdeveloped countries; while we are ourselves are becoming an underfed country. We can produce more and there is no reason why our people should be deprived of an essential commodity because of a lack of purchasing power.

When any area is prevented from producing according to the needs—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time put at his disposal by the standing order is now over.

Mr. Patrick-T. Asselin (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, the minister has asked me to answer this question in his absence and in the absence of his parliamentary secretary.

The matter raised by the hon. member for Chappleau (Mr. Laprise) comes exclusively under the jurisdiction of the provincial government.

This matter stems, of course, from the announcement made by the Quebec Control Board that the price of bottled milk will be \$6 per hundredweight.

Naturally, the policy to be followed by the federal government in this regard will be announced before the dairy year begins, that is before April 1 next.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Now that the hon. member has completed his remarks, I must inform the house that, according to standing orders, only the minister, or a parliamentary secretary speaking on behalf of a minister, can answer a question put on the motion for adjournment.

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

I am sure the hon. member for Chappleau, who put the question, was satisfied with the answer provided by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, but I think I have to inform members present of this rule.

[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRS—BRANTFORD, ONT.—
DECIDING VOTE CAST BY RETURNING
OFFICER

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, on January 13 I addressed this question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as recorded at page 11759 of *Hansard*:

I should like to ask the minister whether he has been made aware of the unhappiness and concern that have arisen over the situation of an Indian agency superintendent acting as returning officer, having to cast a deciding ballot in the Brantford reserve elections. If so, can he inform the house what steps he has in mind to avoid a recurrence of this unfortunate incident?

On the assumption that I wanted some detailed information about the situation on the Brantford reserve Your Honour suggested that I put the question on the order paper. However, since what I really had in mind were the broader questions which arose from the occurrence of this incident, I asked that the matter be put down for discussion at this time.

The fact that this expression of interest and concern took place is symptomatic of two things, first the growing desire of the Indian people for a broader and more complete measure of self-government within their bands, and second a growing awareness on the part of non-Indian people that this broader measure of self-government is something that the Indians of Canada should have.

When I read the report of this incident it seemed to me it was one of those rather unusual events which my own returning officer once told me was a nightmare for all returning officers, namely having to cast a deciding ballot in an election. In this case it must have been particularly embarrassing for the Indian agency superintendent, because obviously there was balanced opinion between members of the band as to who should be their chief councillor and he, as a non-Indian and public servant of Canada, was placed in the position of declaring in which direction he himself felt the choice should be made.

• (10:30 p.m.)

It does seem to me that the Indian agency superintendent was acting in this capacity in line with the symbolic and traditional status