

[Translation]

MILK INDUSTRY

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of Agriculture.

According to an unsigned study referred to by the chairman of the no committee Daniel Johnson, Quebec would lose no less than a third of its 11,000 dairy farms by voting yes. This doomsday scenario was immediately denied by Claude Lafleur, director of the Union des producteurs agricoles and labelled by him as "catastrophist, extremist and improbable".

Will the minister admit that it is in the interest of producers and the milk processing industry to reach an agreement with Quebec in order to preserve the system of supply management, particularly as protection against American competition, as all those involved in this sector are aware?

[English]

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the remarks made yesterday by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Vallières in Quebec with respect to the earlier studies issued by Minister Le Hir were very solid and very credible criticism of Mr. Le Hir's reports which were a total distortion of the true picture.

This criticism has come not only from Mr. Johnson and Mr. Vallières. It has come from several prominent Quebec university professors. It has come from U.S. trade policy experts like Mr. Chip Roh and it has come most recently, quoted in today's *La Presse*, from Mr. Yvon Proulx, the chief economist of the UPA.

• (1445)

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister should read the magazine *L'Actualité* because that information comes from an unsigned Quebec Liberal party document. The authors are even ashamed to acknowledge that they wrote it—that is Liberals for you.

An hon. member: Get some information.

Mr. Bellehumeur: This is disinformation.

Does the minister acknowledge that Canada will negotiate to preserve the supply management system, for if the laws of the marketplace were to apply we Quebecers would come out on top because we in Quebec have the production and the most profitable producers—that is the truth.

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today Quebec enjoys great strength and stability in its dairy sector, with some 12,000 commercial dairy farms, \$1.3 billion in cash receipts from milk production, milk quota values in excess of \$2 billion, 20,000 jobs in rural Quebec, 83 dairy processing plants, 7,400 processing jobs in those plants, and 47 per cent of the Canadian national industrial milk quota. All that is to the advantage of Quebec because of Quebec's participation in the Canadian supply management system.

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MINING

Mr. Benoît Serré (Timiskaming—French River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

The Canadian mining industry is one of the key sectors of our economy, creating over 300,000 direct jobs on which 150 communities depend.

An hon. member: Do you speak French?

[Translation]

Mr. Serré: Certainly, we are bilingual in Ontario. We speak both languages.

Could the minister indicate to the House the principal measures initiated by our government to support and promote the development of a dynamic mining industry in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reassure the hon. member that the government understands the importance of mining to the nation and to our economy. We are committed to ensuring its ongoing prosperity and sustainability.

Mr. Stinson: Then quit giving them the shaft.

Ms. McLellan: One of the interesting things, for anybody down there who would like to listen, is the fact that when we talk to the mining industry its major concern is regulatory reform.

Our government is committed to reforming regulations applicable to the mining industry. That is why my colleague, the Minister of Industry, has included the mining sector as one of only six to go through substantive accelerated regulatory reform. We are doing that so there is a prosperous mining industry all over the country, including Quebec.

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HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.