

*Inquiries of the Ministry***AGRICULTURE****MILK—REPORTED FAILURE TO PAY AVERAGE PRICE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): My question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. I want to ask the minister whether he intends to fulfil his promise of \$4 per hundredweight for milk to the producers of manufactured milk and, if so, when?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): If the hon. member will read the statement which was made in the house and the release which was published at the time the policy was declared, whereby we directed an amount in the neighbourhood of \$90 millions toward manufacturing milk and raised the price for the first time to a national weighted average of \$4—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Greene: —I think he will see that we have fulfilled every word of that statement. And in the *Ottawa Journal* today he will see that even this good Liberal paper commends our policy.

Mr. Winkler: I recognize the verbal ability of the Minister of Agriculture, which is almost equal to that of the Secretary of State for External Affairs—though not quite. I should like to put a further question to him. Does he realize that the producers of manufacturing milk are not in fact receiving the return he mentioned, and that it is his responsibility?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question is now an argumentative one.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Acadia): My question is supplementary to those asked earlier about milk prices. Does the Minister of Agriculture accept responsibility for ensuring that farmers will receive the \$4 price announced for milk?

Mr. Speaker: The question is out of order. The hon. member knows that on the orders of the day he cannot ask a question—

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Mr. Speaker, I just want the minister to say—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the hon. member would allow me to finish. I am suggesting it is not in order to ask the minister at this time whether or not he accepts responsibility. It is not a proper question.

[Mr. Nicholson.]

Mr. Horner (Acadia): On a point of order. The minister makes a statement that farmers will receive \$4 per hundredweight for milk. Surely he can say whether or not he feels it is his responsibility to ensure that farmers receive it. Let him say yes, or no. That is all I want to know.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the question is argumentative.

Mr. Winkler: On a question of privilege. I, too, would like clarification of this matter. I hold in my hand a copy of the Canadian Farm Economics Report dated April 1966 wherein, on page 11, is set out the jurisdictional division in the dairy industry, and the areas of responsibility. It shows clearly that responsibility with regard to subsidies and to manufacturing milk is that of the federal government. The Minister of Agriculture cannot therefore rid himself of this responsibility in any way.

An hon. Member: Let him answer.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is now making an argument; he is not asking a question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

In view of the fact that most farmers are not getting \$4 per hundredweight of milk, could the minister tell us whether the farmers should get in touch with him in order to receive their \$4 per hundredweight of milk?

[English]

Mr. Greene: I can appreciate the concern of hon. members opposite to get their political friends off the hook.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Greene: As stated earlier, our policy is clear and unequivocal. As a result of that policy, in three years we have raised the national weighted average of manufacturing milk from \$2.80 to \$4.00.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Lapointe wish to ask a supplementary question?

Mr. Grégoire: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it is the same question. Since the