

Supply—Agriculture

a farmer selling milk or processing the dairy produce. The agriculture department of the province of Ontario further estimates that for a farmer having a fluid milk contract quota, his cash yield per cow would be about \$400.

Having helped, by means of its policies aimed at political advantage, to place the dairy industry in its present position, I respectfully suggest to the government that it might now take some initiative, that it might show some leadership, in the matter of the solution of the problems with which the dairy industry is faced today.

For the reasons I have already mentioned and for others, it is not as simple as the Minister of Agriculture would have us believe for the dairy farmers to go into beef production. Dairy farming, as with any other branch of the agriculture industry, becomes a way of life and it is not easy to shift. In many cases, because of lack of capital or, as I have mentioned, the high cost of obtaining capital, it is impossible for a dairy farmer to make the shift to beef production as the minister and his department have suggested.

The minister has not as yet given the dairy industry any leadership in the solution of this problem to which I have referred. He has given the industry an ultimatum and he has fostered an impractical suggestion to which I have referred. In the absence of any government policy in these present serious circumstances may I venture a few suggestions with respect to the dairy industry and its present problems.

First, the department might explore the possibility of selling more cheese abroad. It might ascertain whether or not we have an efficient sales promotion program in the United Kingdom. The department might shore up that program wherever it might be found wanting, in order to ensure that as much as possible of the production of the dairy industry is going into cheese.

Second, the suggestion of the minister or the ultimatum, if you like, that dairy producers should reduce production is a negative approach to this problem. Certainly it is not the approach of a positive nature which farmers have a right to expect from the Minister of Agriculture. This suggestion would mean the virtual elimination of many of our small farms. I might remind the minister and the government that this country was built by grasping, clutching, struggling small people who started in a small way.

Mr. Bigg: When did you discover that?

Mr. Honey: I discovered it, and I have grown up with these people who have been struggling, clutching and grasping. I suggest

[Mr. Honey.]

to my hon. friends opposite that when they appreciate that the real essence of democracy comes from the people who start in a small way and have to fight for what they get, they will have some conception of government in this country.

As I have mentioned, it is not democratic and at least not in accord with the conception of those who sit on this side of the chamber, that we should ask farmers to close up their farms and move elsewhere. I for one and the party which I represent do not agree that this is a proper solution to the problem of overproduction in the dairy industry.

Third, dealing with the matter of the problems of our dairy industry, might I suggest that we should develop a school milk program. We should, in co-operation with the provinces and the municipalities, ensure that every child in Canada receives the proper amount of milk each day. What a shame it is and what a sad commentary on our agriculture policy to know that in Canada's cities there are today some children drinking pop for breakfast because their parents cannot afford milk. Not only should this program be supported financially by the federal government, but the government should sponsor an educational program to stimulate and enthuse parents of school age children as to the necessity of their children receiving milk each day. Let the minister look to successful programming along these lines in the United Kingdom and in the United States in order that his department may take some steps along these lines that I am suggesting. I might add that these suggestions on the school milk program form a part of the agriculture policy of the Liberal party.

Fourth, let us consider in this context the sale, subsidization or gift, if necessary, of skim milk powder to underprivileged countries.

Fifth, and finally let us consider the establishment of a national marketing board in this industry, in conjunction with the provinces, as well as in other industries. Such a board would direct and forecast production and could assure an adequate supply of dairy products to foreign purchasers. Of course, this is essential in order to establish, to maintain and to expand overseas markets.

Then, leaving the dairy industry, Mr. Chairman, may I proffer this opinion of mine that no segment of our economy is now suffering any greater hardship than the agriculture industry of eastern Canada. The basic problem, of course, is the cost-price squeeze of farm income. In the three year period 1958 to 1961, farm prices of agricultural products have