

Inquiries of the Ministry

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I hope to announce the establishment of this commission as soon as possible.

AGRICULTURE**COST OF DAIRY POLICY—EFFECT ON GATT**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. Can the minister inform us what will be the total cost to the treasury of the subsidies and so forth which will be paid during the coming dairy year under the dairy policy he just announced?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it is estimated to cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$90 million.

Mr. Harkness: I have a supplementary and related question which perhaps should more properly be addressed to the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the Minister of Finance, rather than to the Minister of Agriculture. What will be the effect on our position in GATT of these subsidies on the export of dairy products which will result from the announced program?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think that question should be asked at this time. The hon. member is asking what the effect of this policy will be on GATT. I do not really believe that the information which might be conveyed to the hon. member at this time is the type of information which should be sought during this question period.

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Speaker, I think this is the very type of question which is appropriate at this time. The effect to which I refer is one of the most important of the policy or program just announced, and one which the members of this house should know about.

Mr. Speaker: The minister might perhaps have given this information during his announcement, although I felt the announcement was long enough. If hon. members want to hear more from the Minister of Agriculture, then perhaps he should be allowed to answer.

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might be permitted to point out, in reply to my hon. friend's question, that we were very careful in this regard. This matter was raised in several of the commentaries of members opposite.

[Mr. Thompson.]

The levy on exports is not in the form of government payments; it is a levy from the producer. They are in fact getting 85 cents in producers subsidy, and the 10 cent levy is taken from their money. If the hon. member will look very carefully at the statement, he will note that if there is any money left at the end of the year as a result of that levy, it goes to the producer. This is not an export subsidy by the government; this is producers' money.

Mr. Harkness: As a supplementary question may I ask whether it is a fact that the 10 cent levy is subtracted from the subsidy being paid by the government to the producers?

Mr. Speaker: This is exactly what I had in mind a moment ago when I thought we might get into a debate. This is not the type of question that should be asked now.

[Later:]

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Agriculture a question arising out of the statement he made today. Has the minister or his department calculated the increased price per pound of butterfat to the wholesalers so that there will be no additional increase in price to the consumer over and above this change in the wholesale price?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, I am not just certain of the purport of the question, but as the hon. member knows, the price has been increased 2 cents, as was stated in the announcement, and I think this portion of the increase will be passed on to the consumer.

Mr. Olson: With the withdrawal of the 10.9 cents per pound subsidy on butterfat, I am wondering if this will affect the wholesale price of butter.

Mr. Greene: In our view, Mr. Speaker, only to the extent of 2 cents, which is the increase that we have put on; because the extra subsidy goes into the 85 cents that we are paying under the new program.

PUBLIC SERVICE**REQUEST FOR POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT
ON BILINGUALISM**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of my understanding that he is to meet later this afternoon with