

mission have received many letters from milk producers complaining about injustices or the lack of quotas.

Several members as well as myself have brought the grievances of those of our constituents who are producers before the Canadian Dairy Commission. To our knowledge, according to the answers given by the commission, some of the injustices that had been underlined actually took place in many cases not as much at the level of the manipulation of the quotas as at the level of the implementation in the provinces of the regulations by the Canadian committee for the management of milk supplies.

I think that to understand perfectly the complaints of milk producers for the 1976-77 milk year in particular, one has to have a look at history. Let us go back to the year 1973-74 when Canada had to import butter because the Canadian production was not sufficient to meet our own demand. During those years, producers could buy quotas at very low prices. One has to remember that, in 1975-76 they could even get them for nothing. Such a lack of production was due to the fact that the prices paid for industrial milk were too low. The producers and their sons hardly made a living out of that production. Then, following numerous representations from the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), the federal government decided to rebuild confidence in that important area of Canadian agriculture by bringing the price of industrial milk more in line with production costs.

In 1975-76, the Minister of Agriculture asked the milk producers to boost their production by 5 per cent, that is from 95 million hundredweights to 100 million hundredweights in order to meet the Canadian demand. The attractive milk price, the ideal weather and the lack of appropriate control over production by the management committee resulted in the production of 113 million hundredweights of milk and in reserves which, by April 1, 1976, totalled 42 million pounds of butter and 300 million pounds of powdered milk. At the same time, world prices for milk products became disastrous; for instance, skimmed powdered milk fell from 45 cents down to 10 cents and 8 cents a pound. The export fund had a deficit of \$130 million by the end of that milk year.

It was then necessary to reduce the production in relation to Canadian needs and consequently to reduce quotas allocated to each province and to each producer. The implementation of the rulings edited by the milk supplies management committee in a period of underproduction resulted in injustices at the very level of the producers themselves, in 1976-77. These injustices which today seem to justify the announcement of quotas, do not originate from the handling of the quotas per se but rather from the implementation of the rules set up by the management committee and which was done to the knowledge of the representatives of the federations and the provinces.

We are not saying that these rules should not have been changed, that they have not created injustices, but we are simply saying that they have been applied without changes. We have nevertheless touched the heart of this issue. The Canadian milk supply management committee which is composed of 23 members had established these rules during a

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period of underproduction and the 1975-76 overproduction as well as the cut in quotas which took place in 1976-77 created a tremendous chaos. Apparently nobody had foreseen the mechanisms which would apply in such a situation. Is there anyone here who has forgotten those 8,000 to 10,000 farm producers who came to demonstrate on the hill?

This management committee which is so often referred to is composed of nine provinces excluding Newfoundland, and it is presided by the Canadian Dairy Commission and its three commissioners; a representative of the producers sits there for every province with the exception of Quebec and Ontario which both get two representatives and finally there is also a representative from the provincial governments. Mr. Speaker, in short, the provinces and the producers of products with a high content in milk enjoyed a definite advantage during this overproduction period of 1975-76. The uniform 18 per cent cut applied in 1976-77 bore heavily on the industrial milk producers who had increased their production only very little or not at all.

It benefited producers who produce mainly consumer milk and who had known increases of 35 to 40 per cent. Today, the problem is different and if quotas were to be made public, any increase in quotas for every producer would then be known, which would enable each of them to discuss individual increases which can occur through the purchase of quotas or by any other means. One of the drawbacks of this action, however, would be that the name and possible gross income of every producer would then be known and as a government, we must wonder whether making this information public meets the principle agreed to by our society as regards the secrecy surrounding any information concerning private people. I wish to thank above all the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Tessier) for raising the matter of the publication of quota lists.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. parliamentary secretary, but as the private members' hour has now expired, I do now leave the Chair until eight o'clock tonight.

At 6:03 p.m., the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROPOSED LIMITATION ON COMMITTEE STAGE OF BILL C-11

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Chrétien:

That in relation to Bill C-11, An Act to amend the statute law relating to income tax and to provide other authority for the raising of funds, three sitting days shall be allotted to the further consideration in Committee of the Whole stage of the said bill;