

Dairy Policy

have their sovereign rights and they tell you what product they are going to use. We cannot tell them what product they are going to use. This is their right and it will always be their right as far as I am concerned in any world food aid program. We can offer a product that we have, but this is not necessarily a product that they are going to accept.

I mentioned provincial boards. I do not know if I have the right to table this or ask to have it printed as an appendix to *Hansard*, but I have a document showing in an abbreviated form how our provincial boards operate in Canada. I feel this is so important. We are calling a meeting next Tuesday to discuss the dairy policy for Canada. People have to understand what we are trying to do. When they read about the different programs the provinces have for marketing milk and then put them all altogether to make an over-all national program for milk, they can see the weaknesses, how the program can be unfair and discriminatory against certain producers, which I do not think anybody in this House wants at all. I do not think a producer of dairy products in one province wants to see a producer in some other province discriminated against in any way, regardless what province he comes from.

Mention has been made of the excessive amount of cattle in the country. We do have cattle in this country that should have been culled from the herds. There is no doubt about this. The problem was compounded by low prices for beef, especially in the cutter and canner market for cows. This situation has improved. There are more cows going to market at the present time. It is estimated that our dairy herds should be depleted by about 200,000 cows. The average dairy production per cow in Canada is about 8,200 pounds a year. With an average yield of 8,000 pounds per cow, this means a tremendous amount of milk is on the market that should not be on the market at the present time.

I do not think we are going to get out of the predicament the dairy industry is in this year very easily. As I said earlier, the problem was not entirely caused by the dairy producers of Canada; it was caused by world conditions, something a lot of people have forgotten. It was caused by some over-production in our country. We are going to solve the problem only by working together; by making sure that the provinces work very closely together in setting their proper quotas, and by the federal government working with the Canadian Dairy Commission to make sure that the dairy farmers in the industrial milk sector are treated in an equitable and fair fashion.

If I could have the concurrence of the House to ask to have the different provincial dairy programs printed as an appendix to *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Does the House agree?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: For document referred to above see Appendix "A".*]

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I am that much happier to take part in the debate on this motion that it is so definitely realistic that it deals with so actual a subject that it contrasts with the issue previously discussed, namely the question of privilege which delayed our proceedings by almost two hours.

Mr. Speaker, after having heard the remarks made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), we must, above all, refrain from closing our eyes and see the situation as it is. I feel it is appropriate at this point that we should consider the factors which brought about the situation in which our industrial milk producers now find themselves. If the minister feels, as he has just shown, that there are no solutions, that the problems cannot be overcome, for the very same reasons we have been hearing for years, and year after year, we must come to one of two conclusions: either the government is not progressing at all, or it has no idea whatsoever of what progress is; and I would even go further and prove right then and there that the minister is not aware of the situation.

The government is criticized for allowing into this country products that can easily be manufactured in Canada in adequate quantities. The minister referred to that a moment ago; he said the Canadian Dairy Commission, in co-operation with his department is preventing the importation of butter; yes, he said that, barely five or ten minutes ago. But, on the other hand, import permits are being issued. Where is the logic in that? Imports are forbidden but permits are issued. I have proof if it here. This is a country where producers are penalized for producing over and above their quotas, while importation is allowed! I have here a question asked by the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) which is on the *Order Paper*. I quote:

1. Did Canada import butter in the first eight months of 1974 and, if so, a) how many pounds of butter were imported, b) during what months?
2. a) From what countries was it imported, b) what quantities were imported from each country, c) at what cost per pound?

I hope the minister will not tell me again that butter is not imported.

Mr. Tessier: The hon. member should refer to 1975?

Mr. Matte: The same thing occurred in 1975. You could ask about 1975 but the same would be true.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the figures for New Zealand in January: 3,330,400 pounds of butter; the United States, 392,000. In February, for Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, 8,287,800 pounds of butter altogether. This makes a total of 24,949,700 pounds of butter at a cost of \$13,505,000. Mr. Speaker, people should stop giving explanations like those coming from the minister. It is true we are applying a madhouse policy. In fact, the problem the industrial milk producers are facing today stems from the orientation of the government milk policy for so many years.

Mr. Speaker, I will go even back to the famous speech our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) made in New Zealand in 1968 when he clearly stated that because of the policy that his Department of Agriculture would henceforth apply in