

*The Address—Mr. Caouette*

He felt it was his duty, under the circumstances, to support the dairy policy of the present government and not the repeated requests of the members of the Quebec C.F.U.

He forgot that he was a farmer and considered himself only as a Liberal member; that is what I gather from his speech. If he were not a member of parliament and if he were a supporter of the C.F.U. of the province of Quebec, he would have delivered quite a different speech on agriculture and, more particularly, on the government's dairy policy.

The hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska says, for instance:

In 1957, on my own farm, I was selling milk at \$2.90 per hundredweight; with a production of 300,000 pounds of milk—

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well aware that farmers who turn out 300,000 pounds of milk per year, in the province, are relatively few. In fact, most of the farmers we meet do not produce more than 100,000, 135,000 or 150,000 pounds of milk.

To produce 300,000 pounds of milk, Mr. Speaker, a dairy herd of 55 to 65 head is needed; that also means a big farm. And even if the hon. member realized on his own farm a gross income, not a net income, of \$8,700 he is well aware that to earn his salary of \$18,000 a year as a member of parliament he has to work much less than he did to keep a herd of dairy cows sufficient to produce 300,000 pounds of milk which brought him a gross income of only \$8,700 a year.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member added:

From 1963 to 1966, under an administration which perhaps understood the problems of eastern Canada and of the Canadian dairy industry, I could sell milk for \$4 per hundredweight for a production of 300,000 pounds of milk, which means that I could receive an income of \$12,000.

Then again, \$12,000 is a gross income. But are there any farmers with a \$12,000 gross income in the province of Quebec? Where are they? The hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska may have made that much money, but once again, it was a gross income. Tractors, a small truck were required to operate that farm, it was necessary to feed the cattle and so on.

Last Sunday, I was in Quebec and I met a farmer of Joly, in the riding of Lotbinière, whose dairy production reaches 138,000 lbs. per year. That farmer, considered well off in the province, had a gross annual income of approximately \$5,800.

• (2:40 p.m.)

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska maintains—

[Mr. Caouette.]

**Mr. Côté (Nicolet-Yamaska):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not want the house to be induced in error, according to the Farmers Association a proficient farmer should produce from 175,000 to 200,000 pounds of milk—

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Order. The hon. member for Villeveuve.

[Translation]

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that the hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska (Mr. Côté) thinks that a proficient farmer should produce 160,000, 170,000, of 175,000, pounds of milk. However, facts are facts.

In the riding of Lotbinière, those who produce 150,000 pounds of milk are considered as real dairy producers.

In my neck of the woods, we have farmers who produce 200,000 pounds of milk, others who produce 150,000 pounds, but also some who produce only 75,000 pounds.

Now, according to the government's recent policy, a farmer will get nothing at all for any increase over his contract or his production of last year. And the hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska will approve the government to introduce such a legislation in the House of Commons, which is detrimental to farmers and adverse to an increased production in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I maintain that the hon. member for Nicolet-Yamaska speaks here as a supporter of the Liberal party and not as a farmer, on behalf of Quebec farmers.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity of meeting officials of the Catholic Farmers Union, and when the hon. member says that the farmers are preparing to come to Ottawa on May 24 next, not to blame but to commend the government, I will tell him that he is wrong. The C.F.U. people I met will be here on May 24 because they are dissatisfied with the dairy policy of the present government.

Moreover, when the hon. member says that if the farmers claim \$6—this is serious—some members are prepared to rise and ask for \$6. Should the farmers ask for \$7, members would rise and ask for \$7, and should we ask for \$8, the member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) would rise to ask for \$8, I must say that I am bewildered.

Mr. Speaker, if that is how the hon. member views the agricultural question in