

*Supply—Agriculture*

and there is one thing I should like to mention today. As a matter of fact I brought it up in a campaign speech. When the government raised the support price on hogs I said at the time I did not think it was a good policy and I still think that is so. It is easy to look back but experience simply shows that if the method the Minister of Agriculture is using today, deficiency payments, had been used instead of raising the support price the situation we now have probably would not have come about. The raising of the support price allowed the big feeders to get into the business. After all, the big feeder who feeds 3,000 hogs and makes \$5 each is getting a lot of money. On the other hand, the ordinary farmer who is feeding 100 hogs only makes \$500.

I come back to the point I have tried to make, that if the government then in power had had the vision to tackle the problem and establish interest free advances on stored grain I doubt if we would have had these big feeders in operation. I doubt that we would have had to do away with support prices and establish deficiency payments on hogs. It is quite easy, Mr. Chairman, to look back. The question arises, how are we going to solve this problem. When we look into the future and consider the potential of the communist countries our export picture is not too bright. Every Canadian has been taught to believe that exports are the lifeblood of our country. I do not think there are too many who would quarrel with that concept up to the present time but I submit we have got to look a bit further than that. In my opinion our most important market is our home market.

That brings up the matter of getting more people into this country. Having regard to our export situation in the years to come, I think it is most important that we take a very serious look at the immigration situation. We have to build up our home market. With the unemployment situation as it is today there are people who will say that to do so would simply create more unemployment. I doubt that very much. I have had a lot of experience with new people coming into the country because I have helped to establish quite a number of them. These people are eager. They see opportunities that we do not see because we are too close to the situation. They start small businesses and make work. In addition, it costs money to raise a Canadian from childhood to the point where he is capable of looking after himself and ready to enter the labour market. These new immigrants are ready to go to work, and I think we would be well advised to spend a little money in this regard.

[Mr. Rogers.]

Australia is certainly doing just that. They have adopted a plan whereby immigrants up to 4 per cent of their population may enter their country in a year. I think we have to do something like that too in the light of the fact that Russia's exports were considerable last year. Russia has more acreage under cultivation than United States and Canada combined so the potential is there. The Russians do not have to worry about prices. We know something of the cold war and we will certainly know something about the economic war.

With respect to the western grain grower, I think we will have to go to the two price system. After all, why should the people of Canada consume farm products purchased at prices giving a return to the farmer below his production costs? So far as I can ascertain we do consume about 45 million or 50 million bushels a year. If we add a dollar a bushel it would only mean about two cents per loaf to the consumer of local bread. This \$45 million to \$50 million, spread amongst the wheat growers, would contribute considerably.

I have no intention of taking up too much time. However, I know that patience is a virtue, so perhaps if I did take up time it would be good for the Minister of Agriculture. I expect to speak again on supervised farm credit, which is another solution to our pressing problems.

**Mr. Michaud:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to avail myself of the opportunity which is now afforded to the committee of this house, to make a few observations relating to agriculture, as applied more particularly to the province of New Brunswick and the maritime provinces. Bearing in mind that the dairy industry has been the backbone of agriculture in New Brunswick, as well as in the rest of the maritimes, I should like at this time to quote from the annual report of the department of agriculture of New Brunswick for the year ended March 31, 1958, which was the last available report. Under the chapter headed "Dairy Branch" here is what is stated, in part, at pages 50 and 51 of that report:

The price received for butterfat for manufactured dairy products was slightly higher than the previous year, but was not sufficient incentive to increase production to any extent...

The figures attached to this report on production, volume and value of dairy products manufactured are for the calendar year 1957. The figures reveal that creamery butter production decreased about 500,000 pounds, while the cheese output was about 231,000 pounds greater. Ice cream production was also down about 50,000 gallons owing to the very cool weather prevailing throughout the summer months. Despite the lower production of butter and ice cream, the total value of dairy products totalled \$7,000,323, an increase of \$106,756 over the previous year...