

*The Address—Mr. Whelan*

ment proposes to increase the cash advance maximum payments per farmer and extend the system itself to all farmers across Canada for storable crops.

To complement this program, the federal government will extend its assistance program for the construction of new storage facilities. In many regions storage facilities are not adequate today, while in other regions storage is outdated and better facilities that have been invented should be constructed. Storage construction assistance is now being provided for specialized fruit and vegetable storage, and this program will be continued and extended to other suitable crops. The farmers of Canada will benefit through better market prices, and consumers will benefit from the increased supply throughout the year, through better quality food kept in topnotch storage facilities. Our research people have proved that some commodities can be placed in proper storage and taken out in just as good condition as they went in, or in some instances even better. This will provide the consumer with more stable prices and more even prices for the producers.

Other measures will be taken to improve our marketing system, including the encouragement of forward contracting and the establishment of marketing agencies to serve export markets. Grain transportation facilities throughout Canada are to be improved through assistance in the repair of existing boxcars, the purchase of more hopper cars, a study of grain freight costs and steps to ensure that existing hopper cars are being used as efficiently as possible.

The Export and Import Permits Act is to be amended to encourage further processing of raw food products here in Canada. The change will mean that, under certain circumstances, the Canadian market will be better protected for certain Canadian products when supplies are not adequate, for the greater benefit of the Canadian economy as a whole.

● (1210)

Dairy producers are having problems because of skyrocketing input costs. It is evident they must receive a price increase for milk soon, and I believe the major portion of that increase must come from the marketplace. Let those who believe that farmers should shoulder the burden of low-priced milk for the families who are less well off than most of us consider, first of all, that it is the duty of all of society to make sure the less fortunate get milk, the most healthy food in the world. Second, if the marketplace price of milk is not increased there will be less and less milk produced. Last year milk production in Canada dropped 4.7 per cent, the sharpest decline since 1920, and in New Zealand, that great dairy country, production is dropping even faster. The same thing is occurring round the world. This all amounts to the fact that in order to be a dairy producer one must work seven days a week, on statutory holidays such as Christmas and New Years and even on St. Patrick's day. Many people object to that way of life in return for the little income they receive. Therefore we must rearrange the whole dairy industry in time if we want to produce the most lifegiving substance we have that is the cheapest thing we buy in a bottle, milk, which we take for granted.

[Mr. Whelan.]

The cow is the most amazing machine ever placed on the face of this earth. No scientist or engineer has invented anything as capable as a cow. It can take the plain roughage given to it and produce one of the most healthful foods in the world. The only way Canadian dairy producers have been able to carry on is because of the co-operation of the provincial and federal governments and their breeding programs. The production of one cow in a period of 15 years has increased by nearly three times what it was.

I have a word of caution for Members of Parliament who have been quite vocal in their criticism concerning brucellosis. I have checked the actual figures with respect to brucellosis. Many farmers depend on the livestock export market for their income. Because of the statements made, so far as I am concerned without any real factual evidence, some of the importing countries have been alarmed and have made inquiries about whether or not they should still be buying cattle in this area. I can assure them that the amount of brucellosis in this area is nothing to be alarmed about. It is something to be concerned about and we are concerned about it. However, I repeat that we have the most disease-free animal population of any agricultural nation in the world.

The market for Canadian livestock producers over the past year and again at present is a very uncertain one. Producers were first faced with exorbitant increases in protein costs, then the United States price freeze, now a technical court decision disallowing the prohibition of the use of DES south of the border. Those international influences play havoc with our food production in Canada. I am heartened to hear, Mr. Speaker, that a city slicker like the mover of the reply to the Speech from the Throne, the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Stollery), recognizes the strain under which agriculture is because of high international finance and the international speculators who are having a field day at the expense of the world's consumers of staple goods. I might mention in this regard one of the staple goods, sugar. The price of sugar has gone up approximately 400 per cent in a little over three months. I am sure that not very many sugarcane workers in the world will receive very much benefit. There are some people in Canada who think we should get sugar as cheaply as we can regardless of what effect this has on the part of the world from which the sugar comes. I do not believe that. I take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. member for having brought this sore point to the attention of the House so clearly and simply.

The market for meat and livestock products is expanding rapidly not only here in Canada but also abroad. The government is therefore developing a new livestock strategy to guarantee the producers' margin in meat production. We are also pushing ahead with meat research which is being expanded and, with more support, expanded veterinary training facilities.

**An hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Whelan:** I think the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) has a vested interest here. More support is also being given to research. New research programs will be undertaken in over-all food production, quality improvement, product development, mechanization and meat production. The aim is to increase production, lower costs,