

*Supply—Agriculture*

interesting to see the change in attitude, and I should like to quote this part of his statement:

—free trade alone will not solve farm problems, because farmers would be competing with their products on the open market and would be buying things they need on a controlled or subsidized market.

The article continues:

"We are facing a difficult and unique situation in the agricultural economy," he said.

Trying to meet the current problems by seeking to regain policies of the past would not work.

The concept of free trade is out of date, he said. The world is moving towards trading areas and trading blocs and the trend will continue in this direction.

I quote this statement because it does indicate a change in the thinking of some western people with regard to the sale of products.

I should like too see encouragement given to a more realistic approach on the part of our dairy industry in Canada with regard to the mounting butter surplus. This is something which I believe disturbs most of us. Butter production is a very important income producer for our farmers, particularly in eastern Canada. I think there is a trend on the part of the general public toward greater consumption of vegetable oils and an indifference toward butter consumption. This indicates we should take a very serious look at the problem before we find ourselves in a serious situation. Perhaps we could encourage the dairy industry to be a little more aggressive in their sales efforts in this product.

In studying some of the statistics relating to the consumption of butter on a per capita and regional basis, I find that there has been a large decrease in butter consumption in the areas in which the greatest increase in butter production has taken place. This would indicate that many of the dairy farmers themselves have decreased the consumption of their own products and have increased their consumption of vegetable oils. To me this does not seem to be fair, particularly when organized agriculture in this particular facet comes to the government and asks for subsidies in order to help to keep them in butter production. I think they themselves should take a more realistic approach to this situation.

Considering the basic importance of milk as a food, having regard to the health and welfare of our population, I think we could do something to encourage greater consumption of milk among the populace, especially among the younger generation. Possibly milk could be made available to all school children at least of public school age. I also think we should encourage the dairy industry to enrich their milk up to a minimum of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per

cent butterfat rather than have it go through the skimming process which it now goes through, as a result of which it ends up with a larger amount of butterfat that has to be disposed of by other means. I think this is something at which we could take a serious look.

With respect to the stabilization act as it affects two of our basic commodities, namely eggs and pork, may I say this. I am quite in agreement with the switch-over to controlled production, limiting the payment to 100 hogs and, with regard to egg production, on the basis of a flock of 500 hens. However, if we are going to apply this type of legislation, I think it would be more effective if we were to pay this deficiency payment on a semi annual basis rather than on the annual basis that we are now contemplating. Having regard to the nature of the products involved, I think this procedure would be practicable. It would mean a little bit more administrative work on the part of the department but I think it would result in a fair application of the taxpayers' money with regard to agriculture.

As to the problem of farm labour I should like to make a few observations. I agree with other hon. members who have spoken previously that our government, working through the Department of Labour and the Department of Agriculture, should bring in some type of unemployment insurance plan for agricultural workers. I think this is something that is more necessary now than it was in former years. With the trend towards the larger economic unit, the large investment in machinery and the large over-all capital investment in land, we find quite a number of people who are making changes from one location to another and would still like to stay on the farm but possibly have not the required capital or do not want to invest large amounts of capital in order to be the owners themselves. However, they would like to be assistants or farm labourers and work on some of the larger farms. As a result, in order to cover this type of seasonal unemployment, I think it is more necessary than ever to have us take a serious look at this matter of bringing farm labour under the Unemployment Insurance Act. We find now quite a number of our more progressive farmers who are doing a good job and who are more or less self-sufficient with regard to capital machinery and so on but who find themselves quite embarrassed or having quite a problem in the fall with regard to getting adequate help to take off their crops and to assist them with their agricultural industry. I feel that this is a question we should examine seriously as soon as possible.