

world leaders in exporting those great food machines, dairy cattle produced in Canada.

The hon. member asked what effect the extra energy costs will have on food prices for consumers. We have carried out some research which indicates that if we went to world prices for energy immediately, by 1985 food price increases to consumers will be as high as 35 to 40 per cent for that one reason alone.

Farmers face the same energy crises as other businesses. The 1980 prices for petroleum products paid by farmers increased by 17 per cent. Earlier the member for Elgin asked about energy costs. I was glad to hear the member for Algoma point out the savings in the period ending 1984 amounting to \$8,220. I might point out it is not uncommon for farms to use 6,000 gallons per year. The hon. member for Elgin asked what kind of cushion we were providing. I say that is a pretty good cushion compared to what the Crosbie budget would have offered. We said we would attempt to cushion the rise in energy costs, and that is not a bad cushion.

There are other programs as well. Research is being carried out on renewable energy, biomass materials, the production of gasohol and alcohol from grain products. At the present time that appears to be uneconomic if other sources of energy are used to produce it, such as oil, stove oil, bunker oil, furnace oil or natural gas. If solar energy is used, there is some potential. The same applies to burning off gas, which is not presently being done.

Minimum research, or possibly more than that, has been carried out on farm tillage—for example, how much should be used on western grain farms. Fuel requirements can be reduced under proper conditions by over 30 per cent compared with conventional tillage practices. We know there are many areas where this can be done. Under the program announced by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, we will be working very closely with his department on a national energy saving program for food and food processing. By working in many small ways, it can add up to a significant saving.

I would also point out that in the food sector there has been a saving of 15 per cent in a little less than two years. That is an amazing feat of energy conservation. We see savings in farming come about through improved farm machinery, motor vehicle maintenance, and the use of low temperature crop drying systems. A farmer in my area, the former chairman of the Soybean Marketing Board, has invented a unique grain drying system, probably the most unique in southern Ontario, which does not use gas or oil for drying. It has been viewed by people from as far away as China. He gets a premium on this grain because it is naturally dried grain. Usually the only system he uses is air but on some occasions he uses electric heat bulbs. It is one of the most unique systems of all. There can be a tremendous saving on grain drying using this type of system.

● (1710)

In livestock production fuel consumption is being cut by improved insulation, ventilation, by the recovery of heat from

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exhaust air, by controlling livestock housing temperatures in heated buildings, and in other ways. Much fuel has been wasted in the past. We are very proud of some of the things people are accomplishing with all the conservation demonstration projects on many farms in different parts of Canada. Funds for these projects have been provided by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources. We do not know how successful some of these will be, but the ingenuity and the initiative taken by some of the producers in coming up with new ways and new ideas to save energy are utterly fantastic.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Chairman, I asked the minister if he had an actual indication of the amount of funding provided to Saskatchewan, Manitoba and to northwestern Ontario for drought relief assistance in the past year. Does the minister have an actual figure on the cost of that assistance?

Mr. Whelan: Yes, we do have the figures. In the first instance we said we would pay \$7 million for transportation of forage into northern Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Those funds were not all used. We then announced we would use moneys for herd maintenance programs. We said we would use over \$60 million. I do not have the actual amounts of money paid out because it is not finalized. It appears we would be paying out a total of possibly \$67 million or maybe a little less.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The parties have advised me that an agreement has been reached to permit any party, and in this particular case the NDP, to subdivide the 20-minute period into two ten-minute periods each. In order to do that it would require unanimous consent of the House. The parties have advised me there is unanimous consent of the House. Is that agreed?

[*Translation*]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Chairman, I would like to take a few minutes to make some remarks and go over some questions that the minister has been asked. I realize the importance of agriculture in our economy. I listened carefully to some speeches that were made yesterday by members of my province. In fact, from time to time we probably share the same interests and the same problems when we speak of Quebec and agricultural measures.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to tell the minister at the outset that I will probably be less aggressive than I was five years ago when several of my colleagues shared my preoccupations and those of farmers, particularly in the dairy industry in Quebec. Yesterday, the parliamentary secretary explained the background of the agricultural development in Quebec and his comments about the direction of agriculture in Quebec and the rest of Canada were interesting and useful.

Still I would like to refer to the document that all members have received and question the minister, given the interest also shown by farmers in my riding, not to mention milk producers, potato producers, tobacco producers and horticulturists. So