

The Address—Right Hon. C. D. Howe

the beginning of the season than there was a year ago. And yet I do not think the figures by any means support some of the gloomy statements I have seen and heard about the delivery position.

As a matter of fact, up to November 4 producers had delivered 207 million bushels of grain and the latest information of space likely to be available suggests that deliveries between August 1 and December 31 will exceed 300 million bushels and could reach 325 millions. This is a respectable total and more than has been delivered during this part of the season in many previous years.

The Canadian wheat board established an opening delivery quota of three bushels per cultivated acre. Because last year's opening quotas were five bushels for wheat and four bushels for each oats and barley, there is an impression in some quarters that last year's quotas were larger. That is not correct, because last year's quotas were per seeded acre and did not take summerfallow into account. In point of fact, this year's quotas are very little different from last year's, considering the average amount of summerfallow a farmer will normally have.

It has already been possible to increase the minimum quotas that may be delivered within the over-all quota of three bushels per cultivated acre from 500 bushels to 700 bushels and it is my hope that before very long the over-all quota itself can be increased.

Because of the limitations on delivery opportunities the government has been urged to provide for advances on farm-stored grain. Let me assure the house that even before these representations were received the government had given the most careful consideration to the position.

We decided that the quickest way of getting a large sum of money into the hands of western producers without putting them into debt was to speed up the payment of participation on the 1952 crop. This we did. A further interim payment of 12 cents per bushel was declared on 1952-53 deliveries of wheat.

The 1952-53 pools of oats and barley were closed out. Altogether these payments involve about \$100 million. Already cheques valued at \$72 million have been mailed to producers and the balance of the \$100 million will be in the mail before Christmas.

Having declared their payments, the government had a look at the income of prairie grain producers in recent years. As hon. members are aware, there has been a big change in the pattern of deliveries in recent years. Up until a few years ago farmers delivered most of their grain soon after harvest. As a result of the more than average crops and particularly as a result of the exceptional crops of 1951 and 1952, this pattern has changed. Producers have been delivering grain steadily and in very large quantities throughout the whole year.

Now let me outline the results of the calculations of income of prairie producers derived from the principal grains—wheat, oats and barley. I shall begin with the calendar year 1945. In that year, prices paid at time of delivery basis Fort William-Port Arthur plus participation payments by the wheat board, amounted to \$537 million. In 1946 the amount was similar, \$536 million, in 1947, \$588 million, in 1948, \$693 million, in 1949 because of large participation payments on the five-year pool, \$833 million and in 1950, \$605 million.

Now I come to the first of the three successive phenomenal crops, the crop grown in 1951. During the whole of that calendar year prices paid plus participation payments jumped to \$898 million. In the following year, 1952—that is, last year—they reached \$1,091 million.

When I spoke to the Manitoba pool on October 27, I hazarded a guess that the income figure for 1953 would exceed 1951, which was itself a year of very good income, but might fall a little short of 1952. I now find that I erred on the side of pessimism.

I hate to be on that side. The fact is that the sum of prices paid for deliveries of wheat, oats and barley plus participation payments during 1953 will exceed 1952. Making conservative estimates for November and December, the total is placed at \$1,104 million, which exceeds any previous year. These payments do not include the final wheat participation payment for the 1952 crop, which will be paid early in 1954, and which in total amount should be substantial.

With the permission of the house I should like to put a table on the record giving the figures I have just mentioned.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.