

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

was buying unreasonably cheap food for a fortnight, the producer was disposing of his producing stock at an unprofitable and discouraging price, with the result that he may replenish sparingly; and there is a strong probability that the egg market will be on the short side this fall. Thus it can be seen that by depressing a product beyond reason the producers must take a loss and the consumer is more likely to be called upon to make up more than the difference caused by the reaction in scarcity.

Fortunately for both the consumer and the producer, the government in its wisdom undertook to readjust the low egg price; and, by the price coming back to a reasonable level, the producer was given the necessary incentive needed to prevent the total disposal of his stock. He was also given encouragement to replenish his stock sufficiently to avoid unreasonably low production, so that the consumer may expect a reasonable quantity at a price fair both to himself and to the producer.

Remembering and reacting from the unfortunate and depressingly low prices they received in the thirties, and encouraged by their various farm organizations, together with their knowledge of the well-considered policy of our government, the morale of our farm producers at this time is higher than it has ever been before in the history of our country, and this is bound to have a strong reaction on our future prosperity.

It is also with deep interest that the farm producers welcome the announcement by the government that at this session a bill will be introduced to amend the Agricultural Prices Support Act to provide authority for continuing price support, and I wish to commend the government on the action it has taken. I am sure that this will be one of the means required to ensure a stable price adjustment and an ever-prosperous Canada.

Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Lake Centre): May I be permitted, Mr. Speaker, to extend my congratulations to the hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. Major) on his maiden speech in this house. As I do so I recognize that it is one of those amenities that bring together members in all parts of the chamber; for all of us realize that parliament can only fulfil its purpose of legislating so that Canada may achieve the destiny that all of us hope for when it can attract to the halls of the legislature young men of ability and capacity; there are far too many who regard public service as something worthy of ridicule.

In extending my congratulations to my hon. friend upon his ability to express himself in both languages, I am not discharging a perfunctory duty; it is a capacity envied by those

[Mr. Major.]

of us who are not possessed of it, and it is one that is of inestimable value in understanding the aspirations not only of the race to which I belong, but also of the French race whose contribution has meant so much to the building of our country. I wish I could express myself in French; although I understand the language, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that if I tried to speak it the house would need a translator to translate my translation.

I was impressed by the speeches made by the mover (Mr. Larson) and the seconder (Mr. Dumas) of the address. The bringing into this House of Commons of young men of their ability and capacity makes for the continuance of the heritage that parliament has handed down to us, and which it is our responsibility to hand on to others.

Having said this, I feel impelled to make some comments on the address delivered yesterday by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner)—which was more important for what it did not say than for what it did say. Before doing so, however, I desire to bring before the house one or two suggestions that I believe will be non-controversial.

The first has to do with the examination of the accounts of parliament; and I have made this suggestion on previous occasions. If private enterprise is to be maintained in this country there must be a greater return to the individual; and there can only be a greater return to the individual if the national income is maintained and taxation is reduced. The federal government annually spends some \$2,400 million as compared with \$500 million before the second world war, and the municipalities are spending \$1,300 million this year as against \$600 million in the days of the war. The examination of expenditures is one of the major responsibilities of the House of Commons, and something should be done to improve our facilities in that connection. Canadians this year will spend over \$400 million on defence—an increase of some \$40 million over last year. In view of the world situation as portrayed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson), and by my own leader in his address the other evening—one of the most powerful ever delivered in this house on the international situation—the people are not averse to expending money on defence and the preservation of peace; but as with other expenditures, they have the right to know whether or not a maximum return is being secured for the expenditures made. I suggest that the public accounts committee of this house as now constituted is ineffectual; it is merely window-dressing. It scarcely ever meets, and when it does, it does not discharge its responsibilities.