

bushels in 1971 to 1,280,000 in 1972. Coarse grains also went down, from 5,252,000 bushels in 1971 to 4,448,000 in 1972. Spring wheat production also slackened, from 1,071,000 bushels in 1971 to 558,000 in 1972. Hay production went from 5,000,587 tons in 1971 to 4,000,054 in 1972.

Mr. Chairman, it is true that the prices of hogs have increased; conversely, there was a decrease in production of about 20 per cent in the same area. We are surely going to experience again the bad situation of the past, when we had a surplus of hogs, a reduction in prices—and I do say reduced prices—because when there is a surplus of hogs, this automatically brings the market to the saturation point and so there is a reduction in prices. This is a sort of a vicious circle. If feed grain prices remain high, it is difficult to contemplate a stability in hog prices.

Of course, with such a situation, we shall soon see small and middle farmers disappear. As I stated earlier, the average income of Quebec farmers in 1972 was about \$2,500. During the same period, the number of farmers reduced from 98,000 to 97,000, which led to a decrease in the production of feed grains, without taking into account the climate.

Mr. Chairman, in the more or less distant future we shall have to face a shortage of agricultural products. Therefore it is time that the government take immediate steps to correct the present situation, either through the removal of feed grain price differentials between eastern and western Canada or through greater inducement for the brave people of the agricultural field. I say "brave", and I know what I am talking about, for it is not easy nowadays to secure the necessary food for all the hungry people in the world.

Unfortunately the eastern farmers have always been forgotten. Subject to all kinds of control, to the whims of climate, and forgotten by the government, they must be very brave to hold on to their farm, even though it offers many opportunities. But, through inadequate measures, our governments fail to provide security or the means of earning a living. It is not too encouraging for the farmer's son to succeed his father for, most of the time, the farmer is up to his neck in debts. So, when the father is ready to pass his farm on to his son, his son must take the good with the bad. Therefore, people lose interest in rural life and leave the farm. This is why, last year, 1,000 farms were written off in the province of Quebec alone.

I believe that the minister is of good faith and I dare hope he will persevere.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** Is the Chair to understand that the debate on votes 15a and 40a of the Department of Agriculture is now completed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** We will now proceed to vote 20a, Department of the Environment.

**Mr. Fraser:** Mr. Chairman, I do not rise to quarrel with the supplementary estimates put forward by the minister. However, having looked at them I am compelled to ask why an item that I thought might have been there is omitted. I refer to the fact—and I think it is interesting at

### *Supply*

this time to keep this in mind—that in the supplementary estimates, despite the growing concern over the fate of the Skagit River in British Columbia, there is no item which reflects aid to the citizens' groups which have been fighting the flooding of this Canadian valley by an American power utility.

There have been comments in the House with respect to this matter. It was first raised in 1970, some two and a half years ago, but it is still unresolved. It is time it was spoken of again in this House and it is time all hon. members learned something of the background of this problem and put their minds to doing something about it. I say all hon. members because there is not a party represented in this House which has not at one time or another expressed their complete accord with the objective of saving this Canadian valley from being flooded by an American power utility.

It is important that hon. members remember that this problem was created by the fact that in 1909 we, with the United States, entered into the boundary waters treaty under which the International Joint Commission was established. As some members know, that commission was created to resolve disputes between ourselves and the United States along our border.

Many years ago the city of Seattle developed a utility department. As a consequence, plans were made and shortly after World War I the Ross dam development began on the Skagit River. The Skagit River's headwaters are in British Columbia, where they come through what is now the beautiful Manning provincial park. They leave Manning park and head south along a beautiful valley for a distance of 12 to 14 miles and then cross the American border.

• (1730)

The area that the Canadian Skagit flows through is not completely primitive because there has been some limited logging there. But it is still a very beautiful place and is close to the city of Vancouver. The Skagit is one of the last free-flowing streams within 100 miles of the third biggest city in this country. I know the Skagit well. I have fished it, hiked along its banks and camped beside it. It is a very beautiful part of the country.

If I speak with some emotion this afternoon for some moments, I make no apology for it. I would ask every hon. member of this House, keeping in mind the position that all parties have expressed, to remember that this is not just an intellectual assessment of our resource use; this is an emotional matter, a question of what is going to happen to a part of your country, Mr. Chairman, and mine.

Pursuant to the regulations of the International Joint Commission, in 1941 the United States, which was concerned with continuing the development of the Ross dam project, applied to the commission for authority to raise the Ross dam on the United States' side another 100 feet or so. In 1942 the International Joint Commission, as it must do, made an order granting the Americans the right to raise the dam even though as a consequence at least ten miles of the Canadian valley would be flooded.

I ask hon. members to remember the climate of those times: this country was at war and in 1941, when the