

Supply—Agriculture

both for the personnel of the Department of Agriculture, stationed in Kapuskasing, and for the farmers and agronomists of my area who have to get there to obtain information about agriculture or research being made at that experimental farm.

The agricultural research work of the personnel of the federal Department of Agriculture in that area is enormously handicapped by that distance, since not only does that staff have to cover that enormous distance to carry out their work and observe its results, but also distance makes it difficult for those officials to have direct contact with farmers of my area; consequently, the efficiency of their work is curtailed by the loss of time incurred in covering that distance.

It is the same for the agronomists of our area who have to cover such a distance if they want to keep up to date and study their various problems on the spot at Kapuskasing, and observe the results to the benefit of the agricultural class.

I wish to make these remarks, Mr. Chairman, before this item carries, on account of its importance for the farmers of the area and on account of the representations made several times by the representatives of the farmers' catholic union of the diocese of Amos.

I am not asking, of course, for the closing of the Kapuskasing experimental farm; far from that—I would not even think of such a thing—but in view of the geographical situation of the immense territory to be served by that experimental farm, it is my duty to ask for an experimental farm for the Abitibi area, which will look, at the same time, after the northern part of the constituency of Temiscamingue. However, I presume that if such a decision were taken, it would be wise, before selecting a definite site, to consult the people most concerned, that is to say the farmers of the area as well as the local farm associations I mentioned a moment ago, namely the farmers' catholic union.

Now, before resuming my seat, there is another point I should like to mention. It is about the setting up of a regional slaughterhouse to serve the farmers of Abitibi and Temiscamingue. That matter has been under consideration for several years, and most particularly these last few years. Studies have been undertaken in this connection both by the farmers themselves and by the chambers of commerce in order to prove to the provincial government the advisability of setting up a slaughterhouse in that area, which would help the marketing of beef products obtained from cattle which could easily be bred in our area. Such a regional slaughterhouse would provide a proper market or a natural

outlet for the marketing of cattle and other livestock which could be bred in the Abitibi area. That part of the province of Quebec is progressively developing and its possibilities are immense.

I realize that the decision to set up a slaughterhouse in that district must be taken by the provincial government. But already, unofficially, as was suggested by the slaughterhouse committee organized in my area, the city of Rouyn has been selected as the site of that slaughterhouse. Of course, as far as I know, no official decision has yet been taken by the provincial government nor by the Department of Agriculture, although the provincial members of my area have already announced the selection of that site.

I presume it is in order to draw the attention of the Minister of Agriculture on the subsidies which might be granted under the Cold Storage Act. Therefore, I strongly urge the minister to kindly consider, as he always does, that problem in order that the farmers from the Abitibi area may obtain the subsidies to which they are entitled, in connection with the setting up of that slaughterhouse.

I shall now bring my remarks to a close. I might add, however, with regard to the slaughterhouse, that our farmers could no doubt arrange, as far as possible, to produce in Abitibi the feed needed for their cattle, because if they have to get it from western Canada, for instance—even though this helps to reduce the surplus of western grain—I imagine that breeding costs would increase and accordingly our farmers would make fewer profits.

Therefore I trust, Mr. Chairman, that the department will look favourably into the two suggestions I have just made, namely the establishment of an experimental farm in northwestern Quebec and the construction of a slaughterhouse in our area in the near future with the assistance of the Department of Agriculture.

(Text):

Mr. Baldwin: I intend to take advantage of the latitude allowed during the discussion of this item to deal with several matters of local interest to my own constituency, but first of all I feel I must take exception to the statement by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam when he suggested that this government had in the main restricted its agricultural legislation to those farmers in Canada who are wheat growers. That is far from being the case, and I am greatly surprised at the statement made by the hon. member. That statement can be explained