

Rural Development

opment of a heritage so very important in an area like the one I have the pleasure of representing here. That would enable us to bring about improvements in every respect and in every field. It is this flexibility of ARDA which will enable us, when the very necessary studies which are under way have proven the foundation of certain measures, to work more wisely and particularly more seriously without having to boast of any action of our government.

It does not necessarily endeavour to find where the poor are, but it tries above all to bring them relief. And in this field of help to the needy, the party to which I have the honour to belong is certainly not the one which has done the least since confederation. Anyway, there always remains something to be done. Through conscientious work, not by always doing the same thing and distorting the facts we shall succeed in accomplishing something for the poor people. In fact, it always comes back to the dollar sign. It always ends up the same way. It is always the same tune. If we lend an attentive ear it is always the same tune, the same song.

If the bills presented to our attention do not always completely fulfil our aspirations, we can always try to improve them somewhat. But it is nevertheless a new landmark which will allow us to follow a safer path, which will allow us, without political distinctions, to further our social, cultural and economic development to its fullest extent if we wish to have a more prosperous and stronger country where it will be good to live.

● (9:40 p.m.)

The county of Montmagny-L'Islet which, according to the new redistribution of seats, is to disappear—it will remain the same in length and breadth—to the advantage of surrounding counties in which it will eventually be incorporated, will become one of the most prosperous counties, where this dangerous downward trend will have been stopped and in which production will start again.

I wish to congratulate from the bottom of my heart, on behalf of my constituents, the Minister of Forestry for having introduced a bill which will certainly make our work more pleasant and more effective.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize for having taken so much of your time.

Mr. Henri Latulippe (Compton-Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question of the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet?

[Mr. Berger.]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Does the hon. member for Compton-Frontenac wish to ask a question of the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet?

Mr. Latulippe: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. member tell us who led the people into poverty, who brought poverty, who ruined the economy of the country, who did all that?

Mr. Berger: Mr. Speaker, it should first be proven that we have reached a point that calls for such pessimism as I have just heard from the hon. member, to which I do not agree at the outset—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. The hon. member for Queens.

[English]

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Queens): Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate I will try to be as objective as possible. It is not of much interest to me which government belonging to which party had the best or the worst record with regard to the rural problems of Canada. I think we all recognize that there are rural problems.

I want to base my remarks on the problems existing in the maritime provinces chiefly, but my references will be directed almost exclusively to Prince Edward Island, and what applies there in most cases equally applies to the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and to a lesser extent Newfoundland.

In the maritime provinces agriculture and the primary industries are a very important part of our economy. The primary industries of agriculture and the fisheries are the mainstay of our economy. Yet if we examine the over-all economy in the maritime provinces, what is the situation we find? We find that the population in the maritime provinces imports—and I use this term in the sense of bringing products into the area, not necessarily from outside the country—about half of its total meat requirements.

If you go into a shopping centre in the maritime provinces, Mr. Speaker, you will see foods that could be produced in the maritime provinces but which have been imported from all corners of North America. You find turkeys from California, carrots from Texas, apples from British Columbia, and so on.

In addition to this the agricultural economy of the maritime provinces imports great quantities of feed grains from western Canada;