

*The Address—Mr. Vincent*

the economic situation of our fellow citizens, and this in the agricultural field as well as in the labour, trade, and industrial fields. One could say that presently we act under the impact of some movement, the interest of which is to see us discuss only those subjects which make headlines, and so hinder us from working on things which would ensure a better livelihood for our farmers and our labourers.

Now, to check this movement, I suggest to those responsible for covering the proceedings of the committees and the debates of the House of Commons—and this for the next three or four months—to have published in our local and national newspapers, under front page headlines, only the main aspects of the problems encountered by the farmers and the workers.

In so doing, they would render a tremendous service to workers and farmers. Hon. members would thus be able to get some information with regard to those very important matters in order to find the necessary means of settling issues affecting thousands of people, farmers and workers, who are expecting our help.

Mr. Speaker, this introduction has led me to speak of a class of our society which needs government help. I want to point out to hon. members that there are many problems which that class of people has to face. Some strong action is imperative on the part of federal and provincial authorities.

Let us, in matters of farm policy, stop taking the roundabout means which we have witnessed ever since this government came to power.

During the last election, we were promised a minister of agriculture for eastern Canada. The farmers in my area and those of the province of Quebec in general were told that this would settle every problem. For several months we were told: The post will be created in a few days, in a few weeks, in a few months. But, as we have seen, hon. members who were lobbying the future minister of agriculture for eastern Canada were not even able to make themselves heard.

Now, another piece of legislation is announced in the speech from the throne. The minister who has been appointed to the forestry department is a member from the province of Quebec. We, in the Conservative party, had appointed one, Hon. Martial Asselin. Today, it is suggested that this nomination will solve all the problems of Quebec as well as those of eastern Canada. And, in a short time, a new department is to be created, that of rural development. Several farmers whom I met told me this: We wish the best of luck to the new Minister of Forestry who will be responsible for rural development; we

would not like to see the new minister becoming later the minister of rural displacement.

You are certainly aware that some farmers have perhaps good reason to wonder if the new minister will not be the minister for rural displacement, because we know that the hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Sauve) was the under secretary of the royal commission on Canada's economic prospects, the Gordon commission which advocated moving to the centre of the country a part of the population of the maritimes and the Gaspé peninsula.

Therefore, it is a wish I humbly offer. Let us not bet on a minister who could become the minister of rural displacement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to know what the new minister thought about farming problems in eastern Canada. In order to do so, I read the speeches that the hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine delivered in 1962.

Unfortunately, the hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine never spoke about agriculture in this house. I hope that, in the very near future, he will give us a broad outline of his policy so that we can reassure eastern farmers.

I wish to congratulate the member who spoke before me for having discussed agriculture, because although he is not a member of my party and we do not share the same opinions, he raised very interesting points which deserve careful consideration by the federal authorities and by the minister concerned.

Agriculture in eastern Canada is suffering. That has been repeated for a long time. Less than one third of eastern farms yield an income equal to the vital minimum for their operators.

In my province, those farms are located on the banks of the St. Lawrence and in the Richelieu valley, where the soil is rich enough and the climate relatively favourable; they are in the vicinity of large markets such as Montreal, Quebec, Three Rivers and most of the large centres in the province.

If one third of eastern farms yield an adequate income, this means that two thirds of them do not. Those who depend on them for their living must count on grants to make ends meet.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, during the last session and on several occasions, I protested against the decisions of the federal government to decrease the subsidies paid to the dairy industry in eastern Canada and in my province.

Many are opposed to those subsidies paid by the federal government. It should not be deemed that these subsidies are too costly, that our supplies are too abundant, that our stocks of butter or dairy products are too high, because—I tell you, and I am not the