

*Rural Development*

Nevertheless, when we must face problems, it is up to us to consider them seriously and to establish priority needs. Agriculture, on the shores of the river, in counties such as Montmagny-L'Isles, Bellechasse, Kamouraska—and I would go as far as Témiscouata—faces very complex problems, because if farms are fine in the lower part of the county, when you get to the heart of the district—and the Minister of Forestry is aware of this, since he went out there and met with the local people—the problem of agriculture arises. There has been a suggestion about a reforestation program or an improvement program, through the development of parks that could be used by hunting and fishing clubs, thus allowing everybody to practise those sports. There is a program which, I am sure, concerns as much the neighbouring riding of Kamouraska as mine. Through ARDA, we foresee the possible improvement of the touristic industry, not only the domestic travelers but visitors from the neighboring United States, by developing access roads to Eastern Lake which, in passing, is very interesting and most important, being partly on Canadian territory and partly on U.S. territory. There are surely many things to be done there.

Speaking of reforestation, I am convinced that ARDA can certainly help us in the best possible manner. It may be, in a few years, the only lasting solution which will allow us to protect our lumber industry, the most important economic element of our constituencies. I am thinking of the sawmills on the upper limits of the ridings along the American border which, nowadays and for a few more years, must bring in their supplies of raw materials almost exclusively from the American side.

Under the Canada-United States project for dredging or harnessing the St. John river, these sources of raw materials will disappear within an indefinite number of years. That is why it is very urgent, considering the seriousness of that suggestion, of that agreement between Canada and the United States for the harnessing of the St. John river which is under study, to think now about protecting our forests, if we want to keep that industry of vital importance to most of the region all along the St. Lawrence.

Unfortunately, some of our forests have been plundered; I do not blame anyone here in particular. There is certainly legislation which should have been passed before, either at the provincial or at the federal level, but I

can scarcely mention it because I am not now asking myself whether what was done in 1962 or in earlier years was right. We are now in 1966 and we must look to the future to be sure that in 1966 and until 1976 at least, we have checked this danger sapping all our natural resources. To a certain extent, that is the reason for measures such as the one we are discussing to-night.

Mr. Speaker, this bill interests me because I see that it means to increase revenue and employment, raise the standard of living and, above all, provide for the participation of the inhabitants of the region in the implementation of such a program.

That is another commendable factor which should be mentioned and which will help to reassure our young people, to set them up or to resettle them by giving them the benefit of the experience of older people, their parents who, as pioneers working these strips of land, managed to make them productive in spite of changing times and hardship. If young people still wish to live where they were born, where their home is, they and those who are less young will, under similar programs, be able to participate themselves in the struggle of their region for survival. Let us extend this to the provincial and national level and we will be sure of reaching our goal.

This is not what I call a war on poverty. I believe it is a well planned and orderly way to look at our production and examine our future needs.

Can we blame a government or a department, be it the Department of Agriculture, that of Forestry or the one responsible for ARDA, for insisting to tell people who desperately want to stick to a strip of land which is not really one but rather an expanse of rock, that in spite of their insistence and their obstinacy, they will never be able to grow the products they want to sell or need for their subsistence?

Then the time has come for the government to help those people through appropriate legislation. I am not saying that those people have to be moved and dragged all over the country, but it is certainly our duty to concern ourselves with the people living in areas where there is no means of subsistence, so that they are not ruthlessly uprooted. But if they are now classified as farmers without really being so actually, they will never be.

Why not let them benefit, under ARDA, from the advantage we enjoy for reforestation work? That would give work to all the people concerned and would ensure the devel-