

*The Address—Mr. Poulin*

scourges like tuberculosis, syphilis and infant mortality. But, like the monkey in the story that forgot to light the lantern, we forget only one thing: to look after that other social scourge that all too often breeds the others, alcoholism. And I have proof to support my contention.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to add a word about another matter which bears some relation to the one I have been discussing since it also deals with education. On April 8, 1949, the Prime Minister tabled in the house order in council P.C. 1786, setting up a royal commission on national development in the arts, letters and sciences. The commission was brought into being, among other reasons, to inquire into and submit recommendations on the following matters, as stated in section (d):

Relations of the government of Canada and any of its agencies with various national voluntary bodies operating in the field with which this inquiry will be concerned.

Public hearings have been held in many places in Canada and numerous organizations or individuals have stated their views on various aspects of the problem.

Now, before the hearings had come to an end, before the commissioners paid by the public treasury had finished gathering and collecting the evidence, one of them prematurely issued a statement which is questionable in content. Indeed, Reverend Father Lévesque of Quebec city, a member of this commission, is alleged to have said something to this effect:

Mere academic education and culture are two different things, when education in general is being referred to. The former comes under the direct jurisdiction of the provinces, while the latter might be a matter to be dealt with by the federal government. No one is more anxious than we are to leave exclusively academic education within the purview of the provinces. There remains popular education or culture in general. We are concerned here with human thought. In this field, the federal government can legitimately play its part. I have quoted *Le Devoir* of February 20, 1950. Since then, I have never seen any denial of this quotation. I therefore have every reason to assume that the quotation agrees with the facts.

The least I can say is that nothing was forcing this commissioner to make so hasty a statement. Had he waited until the end of the survey, he might have altered his judgment. Perhaps he would not have uttered a statement disapproved of by an important section of the people of his province.

I hold this great educationist in the highest regard, yet I feel I have a right to discuss his opinions just as he is entitled to discuss mine. Is he ready to accept for our young

people all that will come from federal institutions? If not, who will distinguish between what is acceptable and what is not? For my part I refuse to accept that and I am far from being the only one who holds that opinion in the province of Quebec.

Moreover that premature judgment is liable to influence the reports which have been or will be submitted to the commission. Why make a survey if the minds of the commissioners are already made up?

I would therefore advise those who are responsible for this commission to make representations to the commissioners and suggest that some of them show themselves less anxious to hand over to the federal government those things which, in my humble opinion, are better left with the provinces. Should the federal government assist education under certain well-defined conditions? Yes, of course. But I am humbly though unalterably opposed to any direct intervention such as has been prematurely expounded by Father Lévesque.

I wish to add that the Canadian government should give the utmost consideration to the solving of the problem of the marketing and prices of our agricultural products. I know that this is a very complex problem and the government should therefore deal with it carefully. I recognize that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) has done a great deal in the past few months to try and solve this problem. I am aware that the minister has followed a reasonable part of the suggestions which he received from the farmers. Some progress has been made but much remains to be accomplished. It must not be forgotten that in many provinces of Canada, including the province of Quebec, the success of agriculture is the very foundation of our economic and social security.

Agricultural associations are unable by themselves to solve the problem but they are in a position to advise the government. I wish to point out this particular aspect of the question. I believe that the professional agricultural associations who have made a detailed study of this problem and who, therefore, are well acquainted with it have already submitted many suggestions to the minister.

As for myself, several agricultural organizations in my constituency have acquainted me with their views and I have duly forwarded them to the authorities concerned.

I am confident that in the light of this information and with the good will of the minister it will be possible to better the lot of an extremely important and extremely interesting group: the Canadian farmers.