

Interim Supply

the bush and try to grow blueberries—imagine the tremendous mistake—while land only waiting to be improved is neglected. Thousands of acres of growing trees are destroyed, cut down and burnt to try an experiment, while just close by, the same experiment has been carried out for the last 30 years.

That is where I believe the minister committed a serious error. I cannot accuse him directly, because I think that the government of the province of Quebec is also responsible to a certain extent, but when something wrong is done in a province, the one paying a share, that is the provincial government, to the extent of 50 per cent, should be alert and ascertain that the subsidies granted by the federal government to pay the farmers be used for the purposes for which they were intended in the estimates—that is, for the Canadian farmers, as provided for in ARDA.

Those are the two questions I intended to raise. If subsidies are still granted to those famous syndicates, and if the very basis of the most profitable industry in our region is allowed to deteriorate, in my opinion, we are heading toward catastrophe. We might wake up too late, if ever, because we will then realize that we have committed the greatest error of our lives.

I said, a while ago, that we are not directly helping the farmers through those syndicates because—and the minister probably does not know it—50 per cent of their members are not farmers. City people—plumbers, electricians, lawyers, notaries—compose the membership of the blueberry syndicates. The farmers who are members of those syndicates, who intend to operate blueberry fields are not at all encouraged when they realize that four or five political protégés direct those organizations in order to have the number of members required to be granted an operating permit and benefit from the subsidies. I am sure that most—I do not say all—of those who direct those organizations are more interested in taking advantage of the subsidies than in promoting the agricultural economy of our district.

I wish to draw the minister's attention to these points, because I know he will take them into serious consideration. I ask him to conduct an investigation because, after all, we pay 50 per cent of those grants. I would ask him to order an investigation in our districts. He would be amazed at the amount of patronage—not federal but provincial—being dispensed in that field. He would be amazed at

[Mr. Gauthier.]

the sums of money appropriated for that purpose, which are not used to help our farmers, and even less to provide for agricultural rehabilitation and development as contemplated by ARDA.

That is why I stated at the beginning that the ARDA plan had never been used in our district. It is the forests that are being improved, instead of farm lands which could become profitable in our area, if only both governments would provide assistance.

[Text]

Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson): Mr. Chairman, I wish to deal with the whole field of cultural affairs connected with the C.B.C. During the last few days criticisms have been voiced on both sides of the chamber about C.B.C. programming. I do not intend to go into the question of programming, although I do not agree with a lot of the things the C.B.C. has done, but this debate has focused attention on some of the problems besetting our national broadcasting policy.

I would like to comment on the remarks of the hon. member for York East on the question of whether we still need the C.B.C. as it is presently constituted. Having been a member of parliament for six years, and having experience of our broadcasting committees, I do not think setting up another committee is sufficient for our purposes. While we might vent our own personal steam on what the C.B.C. is doing, we would come away from such a committee with the same results as previously. The C.B.C. would carry on, each year, in accordance with Parkinson's law, increasing its appropriations which, like Topsy, continually grow. This year it is asking for another \$15 million for capital expenditures.

It is time we took a serious look at cultural affairs in Canadian broadcasting. It is time we took a serious look at the \$100 million annually spent on the C.B.C., at the \$6 million the national film board is using, and at the \$380,000 that is necessary for the B.B.G. Mr. Fowler in his commission report on broadcasting in 1957 made some interesting comments on this problem. At that time we were discussing whether we should have a public system of broadcasting and the conclusion was reached that because of economics and geography we required a national broadcasting system subsidized from the public purse. But right at the beginning of his report Mr. Fowler said:

No politician in his sane mind could want to encounter the difficulties and criticisms and head-