

*Government Organization*

of belonging prevails, where the same social and economic problems exist.

The county councillors, being elected by the people, would, in a democratic manner, look after the interests of the whole territory, of the whole region. And experts, made available by the higher authorities, both federal and provincial, could help in carrying out the projects under study. Instead of witnessing a sterile and constant opposition between rural and urban populations, which phenomena is not exclusive to Canada, we should know a more promising future.

We know that the urban phenomenon is ever increasing, and that rural municipalities left on their own cannot develop harmoniously and help their citizens.

This brings me to the question that is often brought up, that of polarization versus dissemination which is an extremely complex phenomenon. Everyone agrees that the small municipality, devoid of the necessary instruments, of the basic infrastructure to foster industrial development, cannot aspire to industrial growth.

Still, if only certain areas are designated, it gives rise to a feeling of despair, of frustration in all the other municipalities that are not designated. There is one possible compromise: we must draw up such criteria as will foster the creation of industrial infrastructures in the municipalities that are willing to regroup and which together, thanks to this union, can have the necessary strength and stature to develop industrial parks, obtain the necessary sources of energy and communications for their development; in short allow them to modernize their structures in the face of their vocation in today's world, and to encourage through their investments industry to settle there and thereby bring back economic balance throughout the country. This is an extremely important phenomenon.

Forgive me for referring to the environment that I know best. People are often blamed for speaking of themselves too much; yet, that is the subject they know best. I shall refer to the planning carried out in the St. Lawrence valley and the Gaspé region, more often known as the BAEQ (Eastern Quebec Planning Bureau Incorporated).

The planning experts who worked in that area during four years finally recommended the regrouping of resources and farms in ten provincial counties in the lower St. Lawrence area. Out of 10,000 farms, 1,500 should be kept; thus, 8,500 farmers, married, and with

an average of five children per family, would leave. That means that roughly 50,000 persons would leave that traditional field of endeavour, agriculture, and invade the labour market.

The experts also advocate that dairies, of which there are 26 at the present time, be reduced to three modern ones. As for the sawmills—there are now 110—25 should be kept; the others should be closed down by the state, that is all those that produce 4 million feet of lumber or less.

Needless to say, if that program were implemented, approximately 100,000 out of 300,000 inhabitants of that area would be freed; on the other hand the situation of the 200,000 remaining would grow worse. It might even lead to a massive impoverishment of the whole experimental region.

Then there is no real solution to this serious problem, unless along with providing more economic farming units, dairy industries, saw-mills and other concerns, it is sought to provide also more advanced industrialization. Otherwise, we might as well fill the great urban centres with all those displaced persons.

Besides, there will not be any real participation from the people, unless regional government, like the ones I mentioned a while ago, are able to take in hand the future of their area. In fact, they are not more stupid than anybody else and can make vigorous and worth while decisions. Bossuet used to say: Common sense, is to be found among the people. Those who are endowed with such common sense have given many proofs of their vigour. They have worked voluntarily year after year for the development of their area, in order to bring the authorities to recognize their problems and to look after their own future.

Planning is not an easy thing. I could perhaps venture in the poetical field and say "Everybody speaks of planning, Foolish is the one who reckons on it, Nothing is as common as the name Nothing is as rare as the thing".

However, I do not think we should be as pessimistic as that.

It is true that governments have had the habit of following events instead of foreseeing them. Thus, they went from one urgency to another and the depressed areas were left with their problems. Those citizens were the ones known as the voiceless people, or the voice that cries in the wilderness.

Today, with the establishment of this department, we are getting more confident,