

*Rural Development*

excellent one. But I would like the hon. minister to give us some explanations. The bill provides an amount of \$50 million. This amount will, of course, be allotted by a board to be appointed by the department. Its purpose, will be, as indicated in section 4 of the bill:

(a) the undertaking jointly with the province or any agency thereof of a comprehensive rural development program in a special rural development area; or

(b) the payment to the province of contributions in respect of the cost of a comprehensive rural development program in a special rural development area—

I would like to know—I am sure he can tell us—if this money will be paid only where pilot-areas have been set up. That is extremely important. Will the \$50 million provided for in this bill be paid to the provinces to help the pilot-areas already set up, those regions the hon. minister spoke of this afternoon? Here is an example: if a sum of \$20 million is given the government of Manitoba, New Brunswick or Quebec, I would like to know, especially with regard to Quebec, if those millions given the provinces for rural development will be handed over exclusively to the regions where surveys of social, economic, and geographic conditions have already been made. I have no wish to start an argument with my good friend the member for Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata (Mr. Gendron), but I would like to point this out: if the hon. minister intended these amounts to be spent first of all in those areas or pilot-areas already set up, I think it would be detrimental to the areas where the needs are just as great, whether the pilot-areas are located in other parts of the province, or elsewhere in Canada.

I would like the hon. minister to enlighten us in this regard. That aspect of the bill worries me for, in his opening remarks, the hon. minister spoke of three provinces where surveys had been made in pilot-areas. He mentioned New Brunswick, Manitoba and Quebec. I feel that should the act apply solely to the development of those pilot-areas, great and serious injury would be inflicted upon the other areas that are in great need of this help and also need these millions to fight off poverty.

In his opening remarks the hon. minister spoke of the war on poverty. We stand with him, we are all for fighting poverty in all its aspects. Now, I say it again, I feel there are

regions in Quebec in great need of government assistance, federal and provincial assistance, to pull out of stagnation, to develop economically and to raise the standards of education of their people. To my mind, one of those regions is the lower St. Lawrence. I am pleased to see the hon. minister seems to agree with me, but I would ask him to enlighten us at the end of this debate and tell us how these amounts will be allotted in those regions which are also underdeveloped, designated areas. I know our municipal councils have adopted resolutions requesting information on how ARDA might be used to develop our rural areas—

**Mr. Caouette:** They did not get any reply from the hon. minister.

**Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix):**—and in passing—did the hon. member for Villeneuve say something?

**Mr. Caouette:** I said they did not get any reply.

**Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix):** And, in passing, I must point out to the minister that obviously, agriculture at home is terribly depressed. I recently encountered some farmers who told me that their average yearly income is between \$900 and \$1,600. How do you expect a farmer who must pay school taxes as the worker does, and who must make payments on machinery to improve his farm to live in 1966? It is well known, Mr. Speaker, that school taxes are terribly high in the province of Quebec. It would be high time, I feel, that the minister consider this forsaken class that is the farmers.

And so, in closing, I strongly applaud this legislation, but I trust it will be equitably applied to all areas of Canada, not only in those areas where surveys have been made to decide the best way to apply it in the economic and social fields.

**Mr. Rosaire Gendron (Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata):** Mr. Speaker, I should like first to congratulate the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Asselin) for his speech and to assure him that our economies complement each other and that, undoubtedly, any provision likely to develop the Lower St. Lawrence, more particularly the riding of Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata, will affect his own economy. I also wish to assure him of my cooperation to promote more adequate communication so that the tourists who take