

*Rural Development*

projects. The minister has already told the house that the provincial authorities will decide on the pilot projects and that the federal government will to a certain extent contribute to their preparation.

This afternoon, I was greatly impressed by the figures the Minister of Forestry gave us about the pilot project in the Lower St. Lawrence region.

Since I live on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, over the last few years, I had opportunity of hearing reports from directors of the pilot project of the Lower St. Lawrence area. The minister said it this afternoon and I noticed it myself during those television interviews, an economic survey was made not only of the economic factors but also of the human factors of the localities to which the pilot project of the Lower St. Lawrence region applied.

I am convinced that this pilot project was extremely useful when it came to statistics in the following fields: geography, demography, sociology and economics.

However, I deplore the fact that the government did not organize in the various regions of Canada a greater number of pilot projects.

There is in Quebec a designated area, that is to say an area which is not industrialized and where there is a lot of poverty. When there is talk of waging war on poverty, I think that those areas which are least favoured from an economic and social point of view should be the first ones considered.

The region I represent, Mr. Speaker, is one of those. When I speak of my region, I speak of the north side of the St. Lawrence, between Quebec City and the North Shore.

There are not a great many industries. In the Charlevoix area and part of Beaupré, there are only two paper-mills employing about 1,200 people. Of course, I am not talking here of the bush-workers who keep those mills busy but of the workers employed in the paper-mills. There are naturally family type secondary industries but they are far from employing the great number of unemployed registered now in our various selective employment offices.

I wish also to say that our workers do not have much schooling; I think the minister will understand that the area I represent can easily be compared to that of the Lower St. Lawrence and the South Shore, about which he spoke this afternoon.

To support my arguments, I would like to give you some figures. On March 31, 1965, we

[Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix).]

had in the riding of Charlevoix, 2,691 men and 217 women, a total of 2,908 persons, claiming unemployment insurance benefits.

According to the 1961 census, Charlevoix had 8,273 paid workers, namely 6,469 men and 1,804 women.

• (8:20 p.m.)

Since the number of workers has changed little since then, the rate of unemployment, as of March 31, 1965, was 37 per cent in our area. If we add to this the number of persons in receipt of relief who are not paid benefits even though they are out of work, I think the rate of unemployment would easily exceed 40 per cent.

Heaven knows that our area provides exceptional opportunities for the experts, for those who want to look after the rural development of the district. Like all those who visited our region, they were able to admire our mountains, our lakes, the sites suitable for camping. In addition, in St. Urbain, there are mines still idle for lack of capital. Moreover, forestry operations are undeveloped because we lack the required capital.

That is why our area lacks secondary industries which could help especially those hard-working people whose only wish is to earn a decent living.

There are, of course, in our areas economic planning boards. We have the tourist board which, as you know, promotes the tourist industry in our region. For six months of the year, a large number of our people live on the tourist industry. But that industry is only developed to an extent of 20 per cent.

Of course, as I pointed out to the economic planning board, our Chambers of Commerce and also our boards which promote the tourist industry, try to do something to develop that industry which is essential to our population, because our area is one of the most attractive in the province as far as the tourist industry is concerned.

Even recently I asked that Tourist Council what grants it had received from higher governments to works stimulating our tourist industry. I was told that, last year, the provincial government gave that agency only \$2,000 to \$3,000. And why, Mr. Speaker? For publicity to attract a greater number of people, in an endeavour to develop, as I said a while ago, an industry that is profitable, the tourist industry.

Naturally, I believe the bill introduced by the hon. minister, as I have said before, is an