

to specific steps, and I would urge the members of the committee to give some serious thought to this phase of the work that is before them. I would also like to add on my own behalf a word of warning and perhaps advice that there are constitutional as well as practical difficulties in the way of carrying out what might be considered specific recommendations. We should bear in mind that in this study, or in any specific study dealing with land, nearly all of what we call our natural resources are, under our Canadian constitution, a matter of provincial concern, and that the federal Government can rarely if ever take any action without the consent and co-operation of and consultation and association with the provinces. That is the first point I should like to make clear to honourable senators.

The second is that a large part of the lands which might be the subject-matter of inquiry, improvement or, in some cases, regulation, is privately owned and cannot or should not be dealt with without the consent of individual owners.

My third point is perhaps made out of deference to some of my friends of the Manchester school of thought, the light of which still burns, though more like a flickering flame in this age of electric light. This third point is that proposals leading to forcible evacuation of persons or involuntary control of land, in this country which by tradition at least is dedicated to individual freedom and protection of property rights, are apt, and rightly so, to meet with serious opposition. This last point deals with certain proposals which were put before us in all good faith and, I think, with a great deal of public spirit and public support behind them. They would have prevented owners of some lands from disposing of them as they desired because, according to the proposals, it was desirable in the general interest of the public that they remain as agricultural lands or be formed into what are called green belts or things of that kind.

The Niagara Peninsula, which is being invaded by industrial development, is one case in point. There was another case where one of our witnesses pointed out to us the danger of the city of Montreal growing so rapidly into the suburbs that some measure should be taken to prevent lands now under cultivation from passing into the hands of those who wish to subdivide them into rural dwelling places.

Before any committee makes recommendations which would run counter to the views of a great many people in this country, it would be well to give serious consideration to those views. That is the reason why I have added, on my own responsibility, certain

suggestions or warnings with respect to the making of recommendations by this Committee on Land Use.

Honourable senators, because of the vast field of inquiry and because, as I have already tried to stress, this Senate is peculiarly fitted for this kind of work, I strongly endorse the motion made by the honourable Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Aseltine).

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I thank the honourable senator from Gulf (Hon. Mr. Power) for giving us such a detailed and interesting report on the work of the Special Committee on Land Use, and also for his suggestions as to what should be done in the future.

I might interject here that on the trip I made to India last November I flew over a large area of apparently barren land which I was told had at one time been very fertile country. From the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea until we came to the Valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers I could see nothing but desert, with scarcely any habitation of any kind. After we left that valley, which is said to have narrowed greatly over the years, until we reached the gulf, and on to Karachi, it was again all desert land. In my opinion, this inquiry into land use is a very important work, and I hope the committee will give it full attention, because we do not want anything like that to happen in Canada. I frequently go into the province of Quebec on fishing trips, and I could show honourable senators thousands of acres of land where not one tree has been left, land on which practically everything has been cut right down to the ground. The same thing has happened, to almost the same extent, in the Madawaska Valley of Ontario. I have been up there several times, and I can tell honourable senators that nothing is left in the way of forest which could be made into lumber for the building of houses and like purposes; all one finds is some poplar or small birch and other small growth. In my opinion a great many areas in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan should be reforested and the wasteland made productive.

Honourable senators, that is all I wish to say at the present time, but perhaps someone else would like to speak on this subject. I hope that the motion, which is seconded by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald), will meet with the full approval of the Senate.

Hon. W. Ross Macdonald: Honourable senators, I join with the Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) in presenting this motion to the house, and I heartily endorse it. I listened with great interest to the remarks of the honourable senator from Gulf