

*The Address—Mr. F. Côté*

of Nicolet; several religious orders, the Agricultural School, educational institutions which have always shown an untiring devotion to duty. I am not overlooking either the test and experimental plant of the Department of National Defence in Nicolet, and the most recent investment of \$106 million, wholly financed by the federal government, for a thermo-nuclear plant in Gentilly.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege, a week ago, of being present at the benediction of a cultural centre. The federal government had provided \$50,000, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of construction. The centre was built in Saint-Grégoire, in one of the seven municipalities of the new town of Bécancour. The heaviest Canadian industries may settle in that town, which came into being only a year and a half ago, for there are plans for building ironworks there.

Nevertheless, as I was saying earlier, the county remains agricultural. In fact, it is a potato growing and hog breeding county, but dairying is the main occupation. Since I am a farmer, I could not help but deal in my speech with matters connected with agriculture. I thought of everything the present government has done in that field. I must say I am proud of it, even if we have not yet achieved the objectives which the farmers are claiming through their professional association.

To illustrate that point, I will refer to 1957. Again, I do not want hon. members, especially those on the other side of the house, to feel that I am trying to criticize systematically, because I do not think it is normal for a citizen to try to build something by destroying everything. I would not want to be like that. But in the light of the facts and of the speeches I heard, I must try to draw a difference with what I have experienced, because you must keep in mind that the figure to which I will refer are figures I have experienced.

In 1957, on my own farm, I was selling milk at \$2.90 per hundredweight; with a production of 300,000 pounds of milk, that meant an income of \$8,700.

Six years later, in 1963, I was selling the milk at \$2.76 per hundredweight. That decrease, after six years of administration, brought down my income to \$8,280. That was a difference of practically \$400, and yet, the cost of living had risen for farmers as well as for other classes of society.

From 1963 to 1966, under an administration which perhaps understood the problems of

eastern Canada and of the Canadian dairy industry, I could sell milk for \$4 per hundredweight for a production of 300,000 pounds of milk, which means that I could receive an income of \$12,000.

If I refer now to the dairy policy announced by the hon. Minister of Agriculture in March 1967, that price was raised to \$4.75. Therefore, anyone who produces 300,000 pounds of milk will now receive \$14,250. This is a rather large increase, and I think that it is fair to mention it. No other member knows better than I do the needs of our agriculture, because I personally experienced those problems.

In the light of those figures, perhaps I can appreciate the soundness of the policy or of the measures put forward by the present government.

The situation was the same in hog breeding in 1957, when the then government handed over the administration of the country to another government. We farmers in eastern Canada and throughout the country were guaranteed at least \$23 per hundredweight. No one could not make ends meet with \$23, but at least we were sure the price would not fall below \$23.

In 1958, agricultural specialists went around in my area, as they probably did everywhere else throughout Canada and told us: Farmers, produce milk, produce pork and your prices will be paid, because the government plans some sort of evolution in agriculture. We put our trust in the government, and what were the results? In 1959, more specifically in the second week of January, I sold my pork for \$17.80; the following week, for \$18.10, and that under a government in which Canada had placed its trust.

It was sad to hear a father tell his sons that they were going through what he had experienced in the years 1929, 1930, 1931 and 1932. Maybe we had to exert quite a bit of pressure, so much so that we who lived in rural areas had the reputation of always complaining. That is why I will be proud in a few moments to come back to a question put by someone opposite in order to clear up a few things.

Ever since I first came to this house and started listening to those who formed the government during the time we called "the dark period", it has been difficult for me to take them seriously. How many other pieces of legislation did we not ask for? For instance, a Canadian board for the dairy industry, a government agency for the distribution of