

ways and means of increasing both agricultural production and the incomes of those engaged in it.

Broadly speaking, those are the three important questions which this committee is asked to examine into.

It is I think of interest to look for a few moments at what has happened in other countries, and to note what the lack of proper methods of conservation has done to the economies of those countries. Almost 3,000 years ago, if my Biblical history is correct—and if I am wrong, I have no doubt there are several members of this house who can correct me—Solomon took the cedars of Lebanon to help build his temple in Jerusalem. At that time the hills of Lebanon were covered with trees. As the years passed the trees disappeared, and what was the result? The hills became bare, erosion of soil took place, and the disappearance of the forests, the natural conservation agency for streams, has meant that to this day destructive floods occur almost every year in that part of the Near East.

There was a time when the substantial area between the Tigris River and the Euphrates River in that part of the world was covered largely with forests which regulated the flow of these streams and provided subsistence for millions of people. What is the situation there today? That part of the Near East is pretty much a desert, and we in Canada have a direct interest in it because from time to time we are asked through various agencies of the United Nations to assist in its economic rehabilitation.

But the Near East is not the only example of the effect produced by the removal of forests. Spain is an excellent illustration of the devastating results. There was a time centuries ago when Spain was largely covered with forests, which have since been hewn down and have not been replaced. The inevitable consequence has been the erosion and much loss of soil, and poverty and distress for a great many of the Spanish population.

By way of contrast, the Scandinavian peoples have shown great initiative in forest conservation and rehabilitation. Indeed, they were the leaders in this field in Europe. Some 150 years ago Denmark, then little more than a sand spit jutting out into the North Sea, adopted sound methods of conservation by the planting of trees and the growing of forests. This, combined with the use of fertilizers, built up the fertility of the soil and so enhanced its productivity that today several million people live happily in that small country.

Sweden started about a century ago to conserve its forests. I am told that today it

has probably as many trees standing as it had 50 years ago. In other words, the policy was that when a tree was cut down another must be planted in its place.

Numerous illustrations could be given to demonstrate the impoverishing results of lack of proper conservation methods. Take, for instance, India, now engaged in schemes of rehabilitation; and China, particularly the great Yellow River, which is generally known as "the river of misery" because almost every season its waters come down in turbulent force, overwhelming the country and destroying not only a large part of the population but of their work as well. These demonstrate the direct consequences of misuse of land through the destruction of forests and the erosion which follows.

We do not need to go far from home to see what happens as a result of poor conservation methods. Let us look at the beautiful Ottawa valley, which is the centre and home of the capital of Canada. A century and a half ago this valley had the finest forest of white pine known anywhere in the world. It was logged off, used quite properly, but nothing was done to replace it. What is the consequence? In this area today you will find people endeavouring to eke out an existence by farming land that should be growing trees. I sometimes speculate on what would have happened had our forests been maintained, as has been done in Sweden for many years past. True, we still have much forest wealth, but if we had a white pine forest in the Ottawa valley it would add to this wealth, would conserve water for our power plants and provide much useful employment.

I would point also to the erosion that has taken place in the Grand River Valley, in the western part of Ontario. I would hope that our colleague from Waterloo (Hon. Mr. Euler) would have something to say about it. This is an area which we have from time to time discussed in Parliament, because of its difficulties resulting from the cutting away of tree coverage at the source of the river and its tributaries.

Let me take you along to Manitoba; I know something of the conditions there. The honourable Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig) mentioned an area between Carberry and Brandon where the natural cover of spruce trees is coming along. I may say for the information of the house that that is an area where the soil is composed largely of a very light sandy loam. It is admirably adapted for the growing of coniferous trees, and it is a tragedy to see farmers spotted here and there trying to make a living out of a thin soil unsuited for agriculture. But in the