

The Budget—Mr. R. N. Thompson

keep this same matter in mind. I refer to saving the forests of New Brunswick by participating in a spraying program next year. I should like to thank that minister in advance for his utmost consideration because this means a lot to New Brunswick and a great deal to the revenues of the federal government.

Perhaps I may take two or three minutes more. On May 18, 1967, I spoke during the debate on the throne speech. My remarks are recorded at pages 351 to 356 of *Hansard*. I especially drew the attention of the house and the then minister of energy, mines and resources and the then secretary of state for external affairs to the serious question of pollution in the upper St. John river and its tributaries which rise in the state of Maine. I urged these ministers to obtain information relative to the matter and to take action with provincial authorities and the governments of Maine and the United States.

A very serious situation developed this summer on a tributary of the St. John river, the Big Presque Isle river which rises in the state of Maine, flows through the communities of Easton, Mars Hill, and Bridgewater in Maine, then through the village of Centreville, New Brunswick, and finally empties into the St. John river below Florenceville. There is a starch factory located at Easton, Maine, which dumps its waste into this river. This summer, with low water, the pollution became so bad that fish could not live in it and the river became filled with dead fish to such an extent that people living along the river could not stand the offensive odour and were obliged to close their windows. The citizens of the village of Centreville could only live inside their houses with every door and window closed.

• (4:30 p.m.)

A committee was formed to deal, on behalf of the community, with all levels of government in an attempt to have the situation corrected, but they received so little satisfaction that they decided to dam the river at the state of Maine boundary and let the water back up across the boundary into the state of Maine. This action had a very quick and beneficial effect. Very soon they received notice that the industry causing the pollution was taking care of it in some way, and within a few days they voluntarily removed the dam they had built. My point is that law-abiding citizens should not be obliged to take the law

into their own hands, as the citizens of this area were obliged to do.

I ask the ministers within sound of my voice this afternoon to give this message to the appropriate ministers so that this matter will be investigated and something done to correct it. I will not elaborate on the situation. We know that the problem concerns the state of Maine. The Saint John river is an international river and there are small rivers flowing into it. I realize that all these things are difficult, but I know the Minister of Fisheries will undertake to carry the message to his colleagues and I hope that remedial measures will be put into effect.

In concluding these remarks I wish to say that productivity is becoming more and more difficult. I have some experience in this regard. In the speech of the Minister of Finance and in any discussions I have heard on this budget, I have never heard the fact referred to that literally thousands of Canadians are making no contribution to the productivity of this country. Why are they not making any contribution? In many cases it is because the Canadian government, and often provincial governments, are making social assistance possible to such an extent that even third and fourth generations are now being affected. The result is a deterioration of productivity and a lessening of the ability of people to produce.

I say to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and every member of the government who is new to his office that the people who elected them expect them to deal with this depressing and potentially disruptive situation. I think the Canadian people expect this government to replace handouts with productive jobs and to put back into Canadian life pride, independence and a desire to work and accomplish what their forefathers did, who had these qualities and worked together to make this country great.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in the budget debate I do so with a great deal of regret and a certain degree of despair because of the lack of appropriate action based on the statements made by the former minister of finance and the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) prior to the election campaign, during the debate on the original budget and the mini-budget last year and during the election campaign itself. We constantly heard remarks then that led us to think this government really intended to return the country to a policy of fiscal responsibility.