

*Government Organization*

No doubt we benefited in that area by the alternate land use, and the soil and water conservation program but as far as well-planned projects were concerned, we did not get the full benefit of them. If such schemes were carried out in western Quebec, we could derive great advantages in the planning field, for instance, with a view to attracting new industries, so as to foster the modernization and development of existing ones and provide substantial assistance in order to find customers outside of the area and ensure a well-structured transportation system likely to promote the sale of products and permit access to our tourist centres.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to open a parenthesis at this point to say that western Quebec, the areas of the valley of the Petite Nation river, of the Lièvre river and the Gatineau area are real paradises for the tourists.

We know how important the tourist industry is for Canada.

I believe that industry ranks third or fourth amongst our most important sources of revenue, after the newsprint, the wheat, and the automobile industries.

Those areas have tremendous potential for the tourist industry; they have natural and extremely varied attractions. Tourist centres and relays, camping sites, ski-lifts and snowmobile centres, which is a very popular sport nowadays, and a provincial park have already been developed. In 1966, with the co-operation of the federal government and the province of Quebec, eight provincial parks were developed in that province. In view of the powers entrusted to the minister who will preside over the destiny of that department, I trust that area will be taken into consideration in future plans.

I should also like to make a few remarks at this point on clauses 20 to 40 of Bill C-173 which deals with the establishment of that department.

I see that clause 26 grants the minister the power to enter into agreements with the provinces. The minister mentioned that he intends to amend clause 26(1). If I am not mistaken, he will add after the word "may", the words "in co-operation with the provinces". Indeed, I agree with a 100 per cent cooperation. But what does the word "co-operation" mean? Does it mean the same as it does in the case of ARDA and the FRED

programs? Let me quote an excerpt from the act:

ARDA is a federal act, but the program undertaken by virtue of it, is federal-provincial in character, each province being responsible for drawing up plans and programs, implementing them and paying half the cost.

I ask the minister if that co-operation means, as is the case for the ARDA and FRED programs, that the federal government participation will consist in supplying 50 per cent or more of the funds allocated to those programs and that their administration will be left entirely to the provinces?

I hope that such is not the case, Mr. Chairman, for I also note myself, like the previous speakers, that the bill gives the minister very wide powers.

I also note with pleasure that under the provisions of section 24 and Schedule A the areas now considered as designated will be actually recognized as special areas.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, I note from sections 29, 30 and 31 that there shall be a council known as the Atlantic Development Council, the function of which will be to advise the minister on matters to which the duties and powers of the minister extend and in particular to the studies to be made.

I think that this will interest only the Maritimes. Will such a council or agency be established for the other areas of Canada? In fact I note that, in 1966, section 7 of the amendment to the ARDA Act provided for the establishment of an Advisory Council of not more than ten officials, or representatives of agencies, and so on.

We have seen, Mr. Chairman, that an identical section applies to the establishment of the FRED program.

In ending my remarks, Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote from an article by Mr. Roger Champoux which appeared in *La Presse* on February 19 under the heading: "Operation Relief". I quote:

The undertaking is gigantic and the tool has just been designed!

As a response to the challenge it is facing, the federal government is establishing a super-department responsible for the solution of the country's economic disparities.

At the same time, the government is fulfilling an election promise and this must be said seriously. But, above all, it is a last concession to those reasonable people who are asking for strong action and ingenious ideas that will remove several Canadian regions from economic stagnation. This is an urgent and dramatic situation.