

*The Address—Mr. Émard*

4—Exploitation of farmers.

5—Disparity of the farmer's revenue compared with revenues in other classes of society.

6—Misuse of natural and human resources.

7—Misuse of government spending.

All farmers are aware there is overproduction of milk, but they can hardly stop this production (even though milk production is not very profitable and has many drawbacks). For it offers a regular income, which comes in every other week, and most farmers in eastern Canada could not do without that income.

The province of Quebec imports beef to the amount of \$100 million a year. It would be logical for the farmers in our province to expand their beef breeding but, owing to price changes and especially the high price of feed grain and mill feed, it is not easy for them to make such an enterprise profitable.

For the same reason, we are unable to export millions of pounds of premium pork which the United States would be ready to buy from us.

And so, 60 per cent of the farmers in the province of Quebec have a revenue of less than \$2,500 per year. When we consider that the capital invested in the farms in the province of Quebec averages \$18,000, we must agree that the returns are far from justifying the money and the time invested in those farms.

The high operation cost is due to a large degree to the prohibitive price of machinery and the too small returns are due partly to the fact that the farms are too small for machinery to increase production materially, as well as to the fact that markets are inadequate or unable to pay a price that would mean a reasonable profit.

A large number of eastern farmers have been and are still exploited by lumber companies that pay them a cheap price for their lumber, by dairy owners who cheat on the fat content of milk and determine the quantity of fluid milk they buy from each farmer.

That milk purchasing system is absolutely unfair, the price of the product being based on its use.

The labourers of the roads department in the province of Quebec, the greater number of whom are farmers, are also exploited; their salary is 95 cents an hour, which I find inadequate, considering the kind of work they do and their working conditions.

During the last few years, agriculture in Canada has known a fast development rate. It is very likely that this development will continue for many years at an even faster

rate. In eastern Canada, where farming and stock breeding are diversified, problems are all the more complex. A great deal of legislation of a general character was passed to assist the farmers and a great deal more will follow.

But in the last resort, the farmer alone will be the judge and the instrument through which farming will advance or keep going downhill.

For agriculture to be a success, the farmer must know what help he can expect from provincial and federal legislation. He must keep abreast of the new techniques on production, marketing, adjustment research, selection, classification, etc., which concern his farm and the area.

Farming is no longer a self-sufficient individual or family business. It has become a highly competitive industry and only the farmers taking part in a collective action can survive and prosper. What are needed are bodies providing the assistance of experts in the various fields mentioned above in order to settle future difficulties and to continually strive to find new outlets for farm produce.

In the province of Quebec, we have the good fortune of having first class bodies which already discharge that function, but unfortunately they are handicapped because of the lack of interest and co-operation on the part of too many farmers.

For a great number of years factory workers have had to face constant changes in their environment, ranging from mass production to automation. To safeguard their interests, they have devised certain techniques that could prove profitable to farmers were they to adopt them.

Just look at the difference in wages and in working conditions that exist nowadays between the workers who are members of a union and those who are not. If the farmers want to survive, they will have to make financial sacrifices and devote some money and some of their spare time to collective action.

Like the workers, they will have to group themselves in powerful organizations; like the workers, they will have to pay high fees and build up reserves. Like the workers, they will have to hold meetings in each municipality at least once a month. They will also have to set up study groups for local and regional problems and, especially to set up agricultural action committees to implement their decisions and undertake crop experiments on a regional basis.

To reach this objective, the farmers will have to co-operate among themselves, and organize study groups to inquire into their problems.