

*Government Organization*

municipalities, in order to eradicate unemployment and economic problems in Canada, the minister will not be afraid to use the Bank of Canada as we do for foreign countries, by offering interesting terms. If it is a good thing for foreigners, we should continue it but we should do the same for our Canadian people, since misery also exists in our rich country, which should not be.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Richard):** Order, please. I would like to remind hon. members that the time allotted for speech is 20 minutes. It can be extended when only a few members wish to speak but in the case of such an important department, when a great number of members have expressed their intention to take the floor, I would ask them to limit their speeches to 20 or 21 minutes.

**Mr. Clermont:** Mr. Chairman, we are now considering the setting up of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion intended to take care of the economic expansion and social upgrading of areas where there is a need for specific measures in order to bring about opportunities for productive employment and to secure access to it. With this new department, Canada is entering a new phase of regional development, the third phase, in fact. The first one, which followed World War II, saw the equalization payments which for the past twelve years, the last of which will end next March 31, have enabled the four Atlantic provinces to cash in for a little more than \$1 billion and the province of Quebec to reap \$835 million during the financial years running from 1961-62 to 1967-68.

During the second phase, the federal government established various programs and bodies to cope with special aspects of regional disparities such as regional development assistance programs. The Atlantic Development Board, the ARDA and FRED programs, launched by the Department of Manpower and Immigration, as well as the Cape Breton Development Corporation. These various bodies did not escape criticism but I dare say they have not been idle.

Take, for instance, the Regional Development Assistance program. It has its drawbacks but the fact remains that in May 1967, more than 700 applications for aid had been approved or considered under this program. The total cost exceeded \$1.5 billion and jobs had been secured for over 44,000 workers.

As for the ARDA program, the index of the works tells us that from 1962 to 1965, 735 projects were carried out or started for a total

[Mr. Fortin.]

of shared costs amounting to \$63,626,470 to which the federal government contributed \$34,488,198. From 1965 to 1967, 672 projects were started or completed, with shared costs amounting to \$130,322,421 and the federal government contributed \$56,957,139. For 1967-68, which brings us to May 31, 1968, 317 projects were completed or started with shared costs totalling \$71,606,633 and the federal government contributing \$30,788,693.

The over-all total shared costs for 1724 projects add up to \$265,555,524 with the federal government contributing \$122,234,030.

As regards the province of Quebec, with respect to the period I just mentioned, Mr. Chairman, 350 projects were carried out, the total shared costs being \$51,342,244 and the federal government's share, \$23,432,182.

As for the share of the province of Ontario, an hon. member claimed that it was much larger than that of the province of Quebec whereas during the same period, 114 projects were carried out in Ontario, the shared costs amounting to \$60,599,394 and the federal government's share being \$25,567,526.

• (4:30 p.m.)

Mr. Chairman, we also know that in 1966, a new scheme was added to ARDA, the FRED program, and up to now five agreements have been signed. The first and second agreements concerned areas in New Brunswick; the third one, a Manitoba area, the fourth was connected with the province of Quebec, and more especially the eastern part of that province and the fifth, signed recently, concerned Prince Edward Island. The over-all purpose of such programs is to promote the economic and social development of the areas concerned. It is sought to reduce the employment, income and productivity disparities existing between the areas where those programs will be carried out and the rest of Canada.

At this stage, Mr. Chairman, I must say that western Quebec—I apologize for dealing now with regional problems—of which I am one of the representatives in this house, got almost nothing out of the ARDA and FRED programs. That area comprises the provincial ridings of Gatineau, Hull, Labelle, Papineau and Pontiac and has a population of about 265,000.

Now the only two development projects I could find for this region in the ARDA list, concern the county of Papineau and a study on the La Rouge valley area.