

CHAPTER 3

1939 TO PRESENT-DAY

Modernization of Québec,

Quiet Revolution

& Contemporary Québec

PART 4

Regional development & Urban agglomeration

Regional development

Modernization of agriculture

In the 1940s, Québec farms were not as developed as those of other provinces:

- because electricity companies did not invest in rural areas (it was an unprofitable operation)
 - farms were too far from urban centers
 - low population density in rural areas.



Nationalize

- ***Transfer the ownership of certain means of production from the private sector to the state (government).***

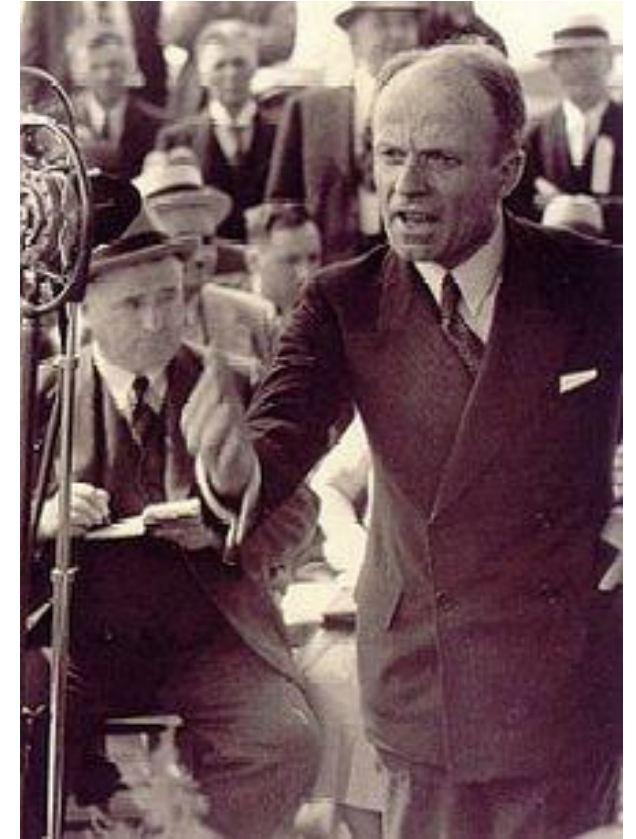


Modernization of agriculture

In 1944, Québec Premier Adélard Godbout (Liberal Party):

- wanted to change the course of the electricity industry
- **created Hydro-Québec**
- **nationalized** the Montreal Light, Heat and Power Company as well as Beauharnois Power
- improved the reliability of the transport and distribution network of electricity.

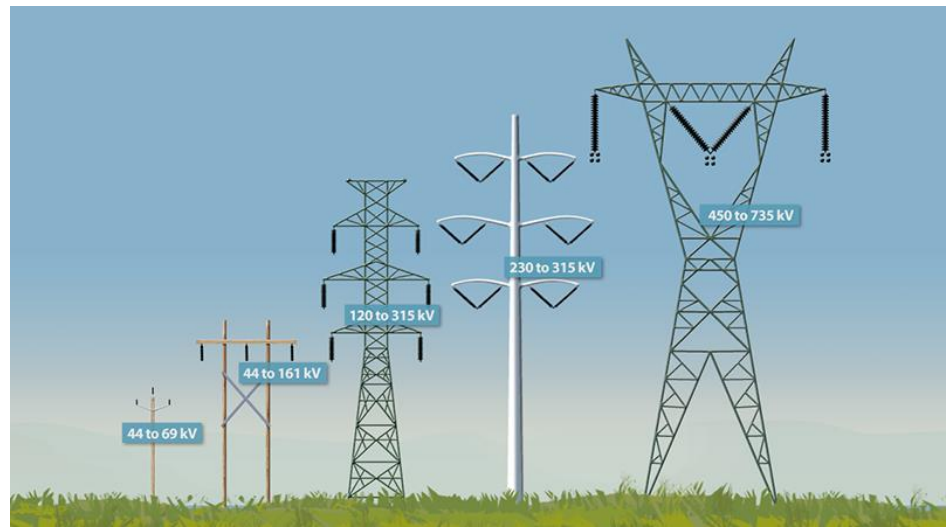
Duplessis protested this nationalization since he opposed all forms of state intervention in the economy.



Modernization of agriculture

When Duplessis came back into power later in 1944:

- he used Hydro-Québec to bring electric power to remote regions
- his government invested \$12 million **to provide electricity to rural areas**
- from 1945 to 1955, the **proportion of farms with electricity rose from 19% to 90%**
- he promised companies there would be no further nationalization.



Modernization of agriculture

- In 1961, the largest hydroelectric complex in Canada was built on the Manicouagan and Outardes rivers (Côte-Nord).



Protection of farmland

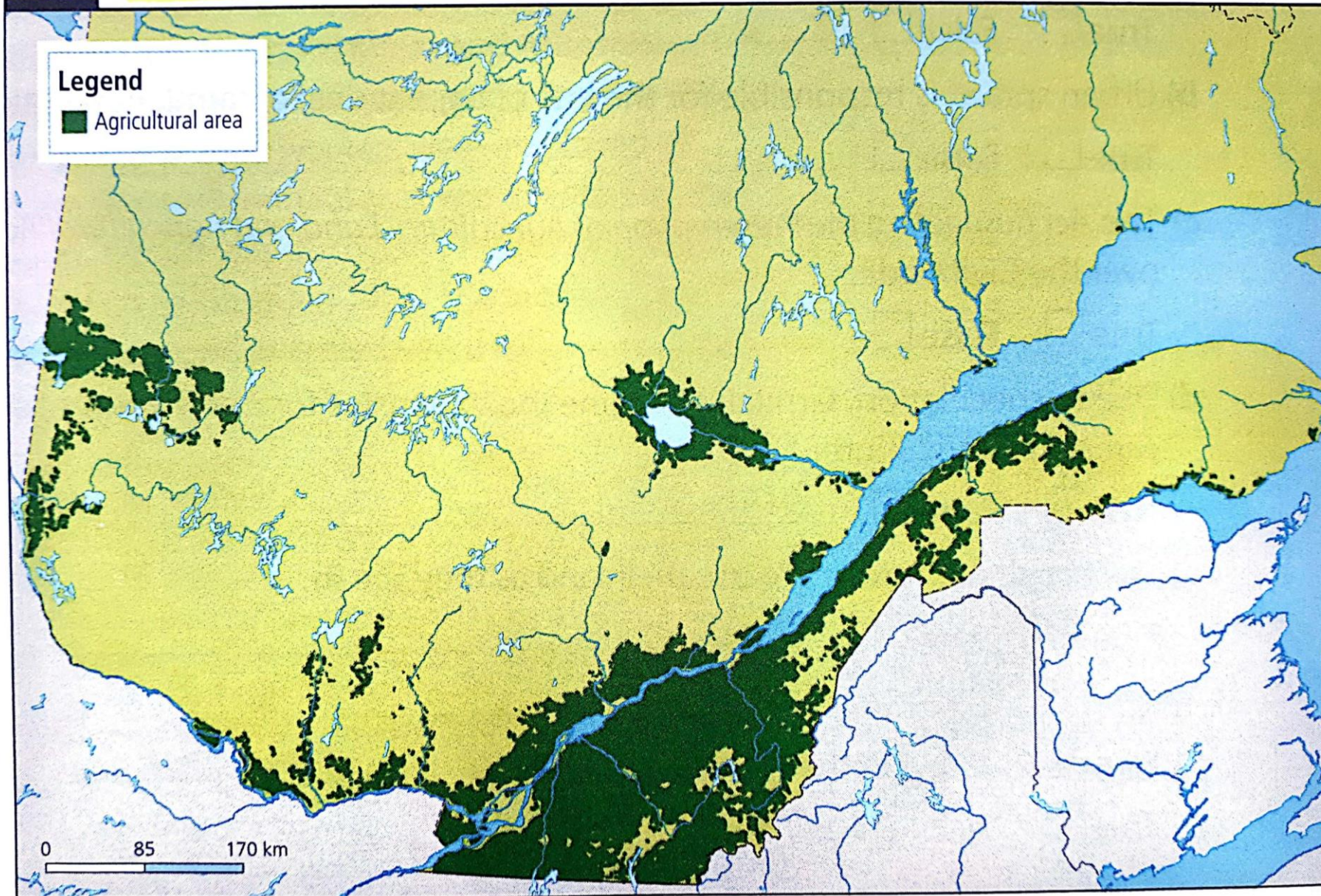
Agricultural land makes up for **only 2% of Québec's territory**, with the best land in the **St. Lawrence Valley**.

The rapid development of suburbs in the 1960s and 1970s took place at the expense of farming:

- Homes, shopping centers and industries were built on rich, fertile soil
- From 1964 to 1975, the Montréal region alone lost 200 km² of high quality farmland.



3.22 AGRICULTURAL ZONES OF QUÉBEC



Adaptation by JLR of data: Government of Québec. Open data available on Web: www.donnees.gouv.qc.ca

Protection of farmland

In 1978, the *Act Respecting the Preservation of Agricultural Land and Agricultural Activities* was passed:

- **OBJECTIVES:**
 1. To regulate the use of farmland
 2. To prevent farmland from being exploited for other purposes.
- For example, it became illegal to:
 - cut down living maple trees to protect maple syrup production
 - acquire farmland for non-residents
 - use farmland to build a business or a residence or a campground.



Despite efforts of the government, developers have succeeded in circumventing the law.

Urban sprawl and the **disuse of viable farmland** continues today.

Exploitation of natural resources

The exploitation of natural resources expanded rapidly in Québec after WW2:

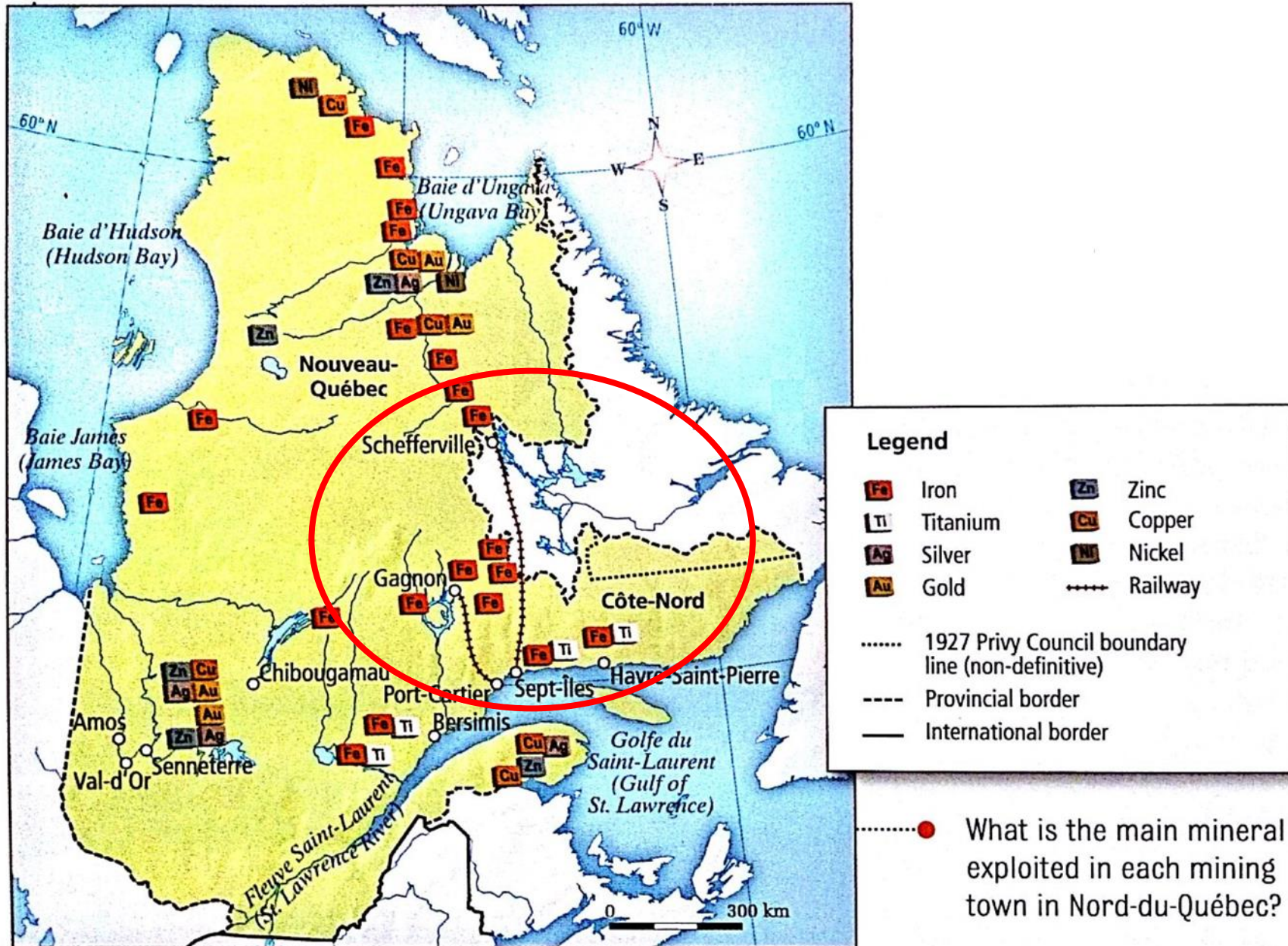
- The boom in this sector was because of:
 - the rebuilding of a devastated Europe
 - the boom in consumption
 - the arms race related to the Cold War and the Korean War.
- Canadian and American **industries were operating at full capacity.**
- For Québec, increase in finding and extracting natural resources:
 - gave a **major boost to the development of regions**
 - attracted billions of \$ in investments (subsoil, forests, waterways).

Exploitation of natural resources

1. Mining sector (1945-1980):

- There was a **mining boom** (iron ore, copper, asbestos, gold, zinc, titanium)
- The mining sector **created many jobs** directly and indirectly.
- In 1945, the **Côte-Nord region** benefited from the discovery of a reserve of 400 million tones of **iron ore** near Schefferville:
 - a railway was built between Schefferville and Sept-Îles
 - port facilities were upgraded
 - 2 hydroelectric plants were built
 - iron ore processing plants were built
 - the city of Fermont was founded.

128 Mining development, circa the end of the 1950s

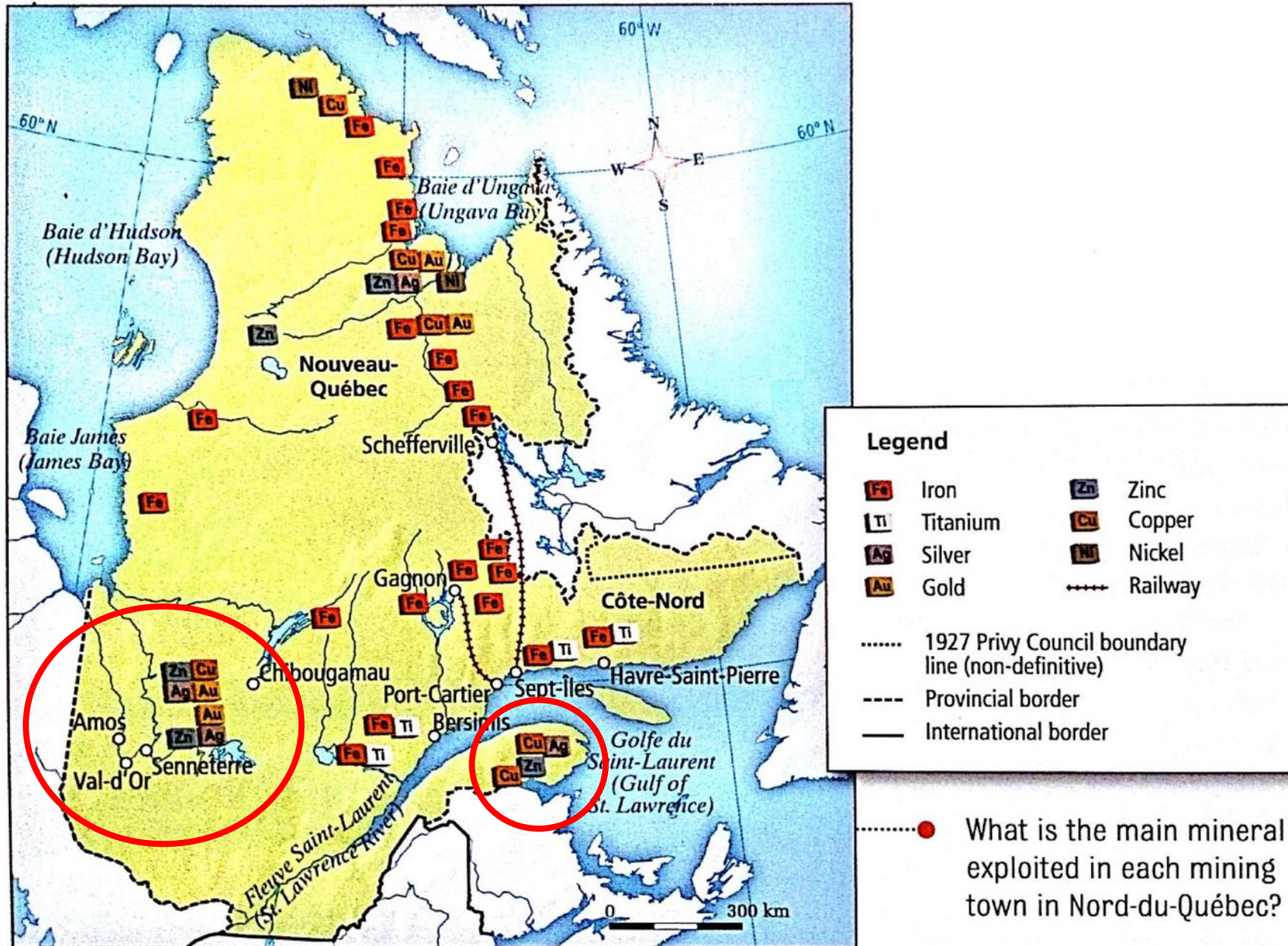


Exploitation of natural resources

1. Mining sector (1945-1980):

- **Gold, copper and kimberlite** (*igneous rock that sometimes contains diamonds*) were discovered in **Abitibi-Témiscamingue**.
- **Asbestos** mining transformed the regions of **Estrie** and **Chaudière-Appalaches**
 - 3 major mines opened at Black Lake, Thetford Mines and Asbestos.
- In 1954, a **copper mine** and a **smelter** to process the copper were built in Murdochville, in the **Gaspé** region.

128 Mining development, circa the end of the 1950s



Exploitation of natural resources

1. Mining sector (1945-1980):

- Even the **Greater Montréal area** benefited from the mining boom
 - In 1967, a **niobium deposit** (*white metal used to lighten and strengthen steel alloys used in cars, oil pipelines, bridges, etc.*) was found near Oka
 - In 1968, 10 **diamonds** were discovered on Île-Bizard.



Exploitation of natural resources

2. Forestry sector:

- It received a **boost** from the economic recovery
- **Mechanization** made it possible to work all seasons
- In the **1950s**, Québec became:
 - **the world's leading producer of pulp and paper**
 - **the largest exporter of paper.**



Exploitation of natural resources

3. Energy sector:

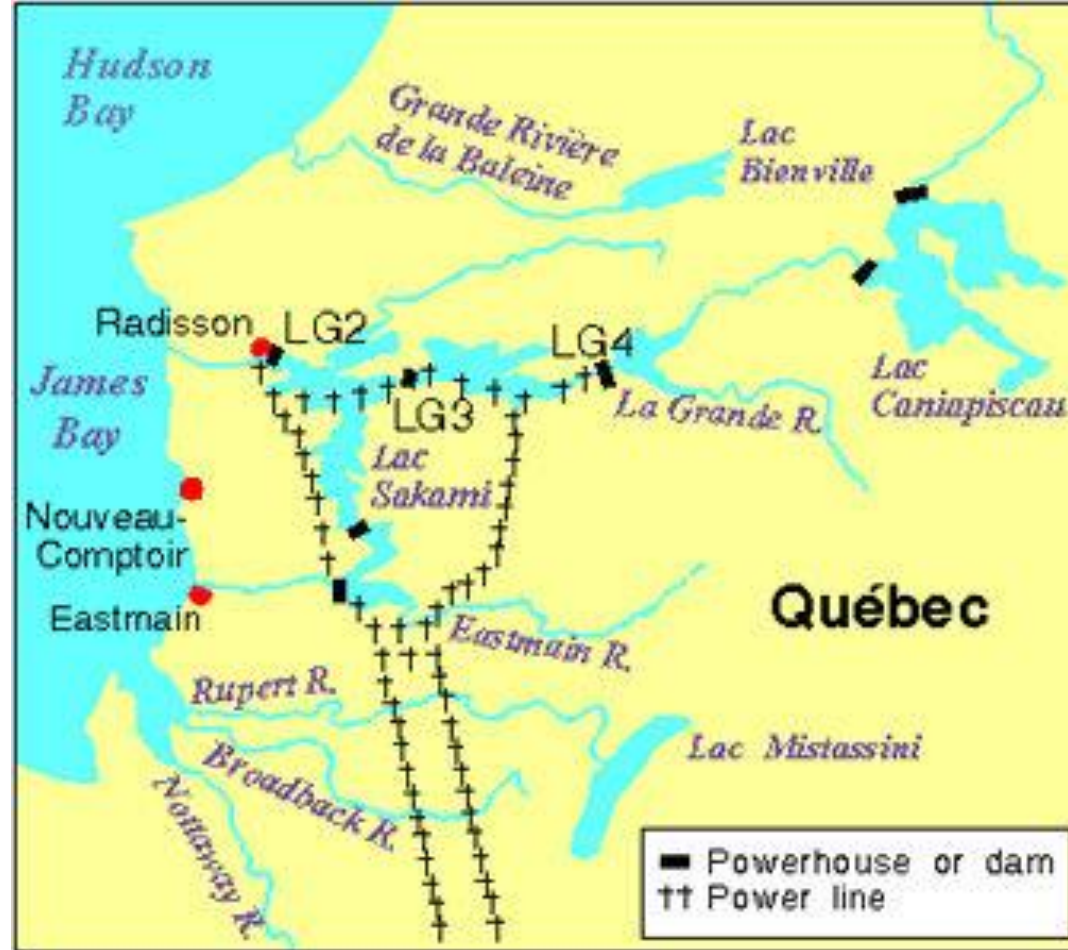
- There were **profound changes**. In the **1960s**, the government sought to expand its role in the economy:
 - Crown corporations and ministries were created.
- With Hydro-Québec:
 - the province was able to offer **the cheapest electricity in North America**
 - **businesses** that consumed large amounts of energy **came to QC**
 - **residential consumption grew**, because households had more and more electric appliances.

Exploitation of natural resources

3. Energy sector:

- In **1971**, the government of Québec began work on the largest hydroelectric complex in the world: **the James Bay Project**
 - It was dubbed “**the project of the century**”
 - It took 25 years to complete.





In 1971, Hydro-Québec and the Québec government initiated the James Bay Project, a monumental hydroelectric-power development on the east coast of James Bay. Over the course of two phases they built a total of eight generating stations, allowing for the pollution-free production of a significant portion of Québec's electricity. The projects also profoundly disrupted the environment and the Aboriginal communities (Cree) living in the region, however, the effects of which are still felt today.

Urban agglomeration

Suburbs

The baby boom and immigration after WW2 had a big impact on organization of Québec:

- **CAUSE:** Most immigrants and many young people came to urban centers **where there were more jobs**
- **CONSEQUENCE:** The **rate of urbanization** (*development of cities, growing concentration of the population in urban areas*) **grew rapidly**
 - In 1941: 61.2%
 - In 1961: 74.3%

Suburbs

Large cities like Montréal started to experience a housing shortage:

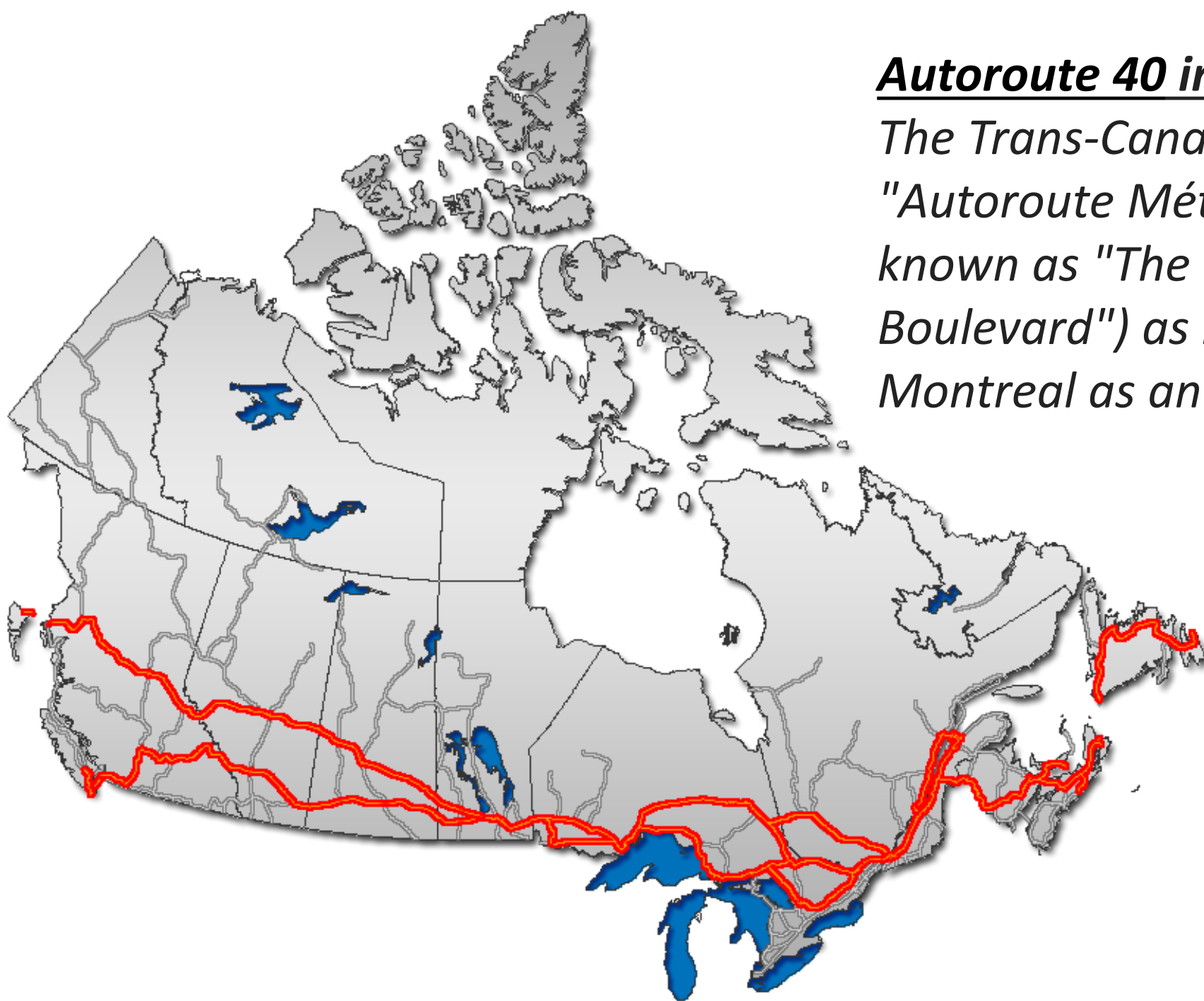
- The cost of housing increased, becoming too high for young families to afford
- So, **affordable bungalows were built** on the periphery of large cities, **creating suburbs**
 - Over 400,000 of these houses were built between 1948 and 1960
 - **Suburbs were expanding faster** than city centers.



Infrastructure

Young families in the new suburbs needed public services:

- Basic infrastructure like water and sewer systems
- Schools, sports and recreation centers, places of worship
- Roads and highways were needed to allow transportation between suburbs and workplaces, institutions of higher education and shopping areas
- Under the governance of the *Union nationale*, Montréal became more accessible for suburban commuters:
 - Construction of the Metropolitan Autoroute (40)
 - Roads on the South Shore that provided quick access to the Jacques Cartier, Champlain and Victoria bridges.



Autoroute 40 in Québec

The Trans-Canada assumes the name "Autoroute Métropolitaine" (also known as "The Met" or "Metropolitan Boulevard") as it passes through Montreal as an elevated highway.





*Construction of the
Turcot Interchange
in Montréal in
1966.*

Infrastructure

- In the suburbs, businesses grouped into commercial centers with vast parking areas
- The **automobile** was the cornerstone of these municipalities
- Suburbs did not prioritize public transportation.

