

*Rural Development*

patronage. A great deal will depend on the calibre of the members of the advisory committees set up at the local level to advise the department on ways and means of administering the bill. If the farmers across this nation observe that men are appointed to these committees because of their peculiar abilities, because of their technical knowledge of the problems involved, because of their previous experience with the problems of agriculture, if men of this type are appointed regardless of political affiliations, then the people who are engaged in agriculture will begin to have faith in the government's objectives in passing this bill.

However, as I pointed out before, Mr. Speaker, if the farmers find that men of questionable ability are put on these boards because of their political affiliation rather than their knowledge of agriculture, then this operation will collapse. It will not receive and will not deserve the co-operation of the people engaged in agriculture. The co-operation of these people is necessary for the complete fulfilment of the wishes of the minister as he outlined them in the house today.

When the minister was dealing with designated areas of rural poverty he did not point out that Ontario has such areas. It is true that there are some sections of Ontario where agriculture is carried on to a remarkable degree and which are classified as some of the most progressive areas in Canada. However, sir, there are other rural development areas around the clay belt and on both sides of the Ottawa valley where conditions are not as affluent. I do not believe that the application of this bill should be confined to the areas outlined by the minister.

I am going to be very interested indeed when the minister deals with the different clauses of the bill to hear him outline in detail the machinery set up, provincially and at the local level, to analyse all the various areas across this great country of ours. As I stated before, agriculture today presents a tremendous challenge to people with vigour and imagination, to people who are determined to analyse the situation and to familiarize themselves with the tremendous problems of shortage of food, which will cost Canada and other nations dear in the future. We should design practical means to meet this challenge and to have the energy and resources behind these means to carry out our ideas, once they are conceived.

[Mr. Danforth.]

● (7:00 p.m.)

Once again, I think that far too often when we contemplate these areas of so-called rural poverty we confine ourselves to too limited a scope. We concentrate our thinking on what we can do to the soil itself in order to provide a better living for our people. I was very interested indeed to hear the minister speak of social welfare and the desire for and necessity to educate people, to train them for other trades and for a better way of life. But I cannot accept the solution which is offered in too many instances, that the people on these so-called submarginal farms and in areas of rural poverty should be taken off the land. This is not, in my honest opinion, the answer for which we are looking.

The reason these people are on the land is because they want to be on the land. They are on the land because this is the type of living they wish for themselves and their families. They are on the land by desire; and it is up to us at the federal level to explore the ways and means of providing the necessary climate which will enable these people to earn a living where they are presently located.

I have been tremendously impressed by one of the growing industries in this country, and how its methods might be applied in these particular areas. I speak of the tourist industry, with which we are all familiar. I am often amazed at the tremendous dollar earnings this industry brings into sometimes very small and restricted areas.

A striking example is taking place in my own province of Ontario. I happen to live adjacent to two provincial parks. These parks are perhaps no closer than some other areas to the United States, from where a great number of our tourists come. These parks to which I refer have been developed by local labour, which has cleared the underbrush and provided the necessary facilities. The amazing thing is that in the course of the tourist season these parks in their very first year of operation attracted hundreds of thousands of tourists, with a consequent tremendous influx of money to the area.

These tourists provide work for most of the local people by way of developing marinas, offering guide services, enlarging local vegetable and fruit routes, as well as bread routes. The dairy facilities require more scope. Very soon we see a complex municipality with tremendous surge. We see a little village of 700 to 800 people become for a few weeks a town of some thousands, bringing