

Rural Development

which farm people may secure a larger share of the tourist dollar. A sugar bush can be maintained on rough areas which are unfit for agriculture and, properly managed, can be the source of extra revenue to the family farm.

● (4:40 p.m.)

These sidelines which I have enumerated could be promoted on family units over a wide area of the country. Some of the projects would lend themselves also to specialization. I draw attention to them in the hope that provincial governments or agencies thereof, through the provisions in this bill, might promote them among the rural people, 20 per cent of whom now operate farms which yield less than \$1,200 a year to their operators.

It has been mentioned that marginal and submarginal farms could be converted to forest or tree farms. The Christmas tree farm is the only part of this program that would make a practical operation for individuals. Other reforestation of any magnitude is a long-range program and would of necessity be the responsibility of large pulp and paper companies, the provincial and federal governments, or all three working together. This bill provides for such action which should be one of the projects for immediate consideration and expansion.

Reforestation of large areas which have been timbered is taken care of to some extent by nature but these areas, if properly managed and if proper trees are introduced, would in the years ahead be much more productive. This holds true in my part of the province where we had many fine stands of hardwood but these areas are now cluttered up with tree tops and brush. They are of little value as pasture land and reforestation is the only hope of putting such properties back into useful production. Since we have such large areas denuded by timber exploitation and erosion, our water levels have dropped so that many wells go dry for several months of the year. Through the ARDA program and the provisions of this bill we have some hope of rectifying the situation, and I feel sure this can be accomplished with an accelerated reforestation program.

I would suggest an immediate survey be made of the facilities available throughout the country for the production of seedlings. If more accommodation is required to supply the quantities needed, steps should be taken in co-operation with the provincial government to get these establishments under way

[Mr. Noble.]

promptly. Reforestation, it seems to me, offers the best means to the result which we hope will be accomplished when the principles of ARDA are applied which is, to state it briefly, to promote conservation in all elements and create better circumstances for rural people in the unsatisfactory income brackets. The benefits of reforestation would affect our whole economy. We have much secondary industry which is dependent on forest products. Wood has never been replaced as man's most valuable servant. Instead, thousands of new uses have been found for it and old uses have been continually improved.

Most of western Ontario is vitally concerned with the matter of water. Cities are exploiting the areas adjacent to them and rural people in these areas are having trouble keeping a constant supply of water. Reforestation in the proper places can do much to relieve the situation. In the county of Grey there is the highest point of land in Ontario, 1,735 feet above sea level. This is the great watershed of a large portion of western Ontario. This great ridge encompassing approximately 40,000 acres should be completely reforested. In so doing results would be forthcoming and in a comparatively short time the Grand, the Humber, and the Credit Rivers which flow south, the Saugeen and the Sauble which flow west, and all the streams and rivers flowing north into Georgian Bay, could be restored to their natural flow with the assurance that spring floods would be at a minimum. The same program could be instituted at the headwaters of all western Ontario rivers or in any other province where such conditions exist.

Without a doubt the day is not far off when this program will be an absolute necessity. I would commend it for early consideration under this legislation with the co-operation of the provincial government. These 40,000 acres of which I speak could also serve the purpose of a national park and game sanctuary. Under the authority of this bill more suitable areas should now be designated for national parks while choice virgin timbered locations are still available. Fire and exploitation have lost to our people some ideal territory for this purpose. More game sanctuaries are required if we are to maintain wild life populations. We have thousands more joining the ranks of our hunters each year, and sport magazines continually report the scarcity of game in widespread areas. This is particularly true of the whitetail or red deer. Submarginal land or wasteland could be converted to suitable