

*Rural Development*

apathy when forced to accept the poor quality of instruction which an uneducated teacher, however well-intentioned, is able to impart. It is like trying to grow plants without water and sunshine. If hon. members saw the television program "Inquiry" a year and a half ago, which made a report on this region, they must have been shocked at the terrible situation of the families living in this area.

*[Translation]*

There is no need to say more. Only by large capital investments, by a new, careful and general land redistribution and by other measures strong enough to change the way of life of each community, can we hope to end the poverty of these Canadians. In this region, as in others I have mentioned, ARDA teams—which are groups of experts in economic and social development—are deciding on plans of action. The special fund provided for by Bill No. C-151 is indispensable for these programs; it will bring an economic impetus which will counter the social and economic stagnation now holding back thousands of our rural people and preventing Canadians from making the contribution they might if they had the opportunity.

It is essential to assert that the government does not want the fund to be used in the form of transfers. The fund will not serve as a disguised social welfare program nor as a program whose sole objective would be to give work to the unemployed. It will not be used to support the economy in areas having insufficient resources to ever be able to provide a reasonable income to its citizens. The fund will be used to develop promising resources and provide other opportunities for resourceful people. Because it is concentrated on relatively small areas whose needs are great and whose economic potential is adequate, instead of being diluted right across the country, the fund should give impressive results over a few years. By this I mean that we can expect to see these areas work much better socially in about ten years and much more rationally from the economic standpoint.

I must say that in planning the creation and the application of the fund, we have considered similar plans developed in the United States and in Europe and taken advantage of their experience; we have developed our programs after consulting all the provinces of Canada and with their consent.

[Mr. Sauv .]

*[English]*

Our intention under ARDA is not simply to adopt a welfare approach, which alleviates problems but does not solve them. Rather our practice will be to gather the facts, to evolve a strategy of development. On the basis of a plan for the most rational form of development and adjustment the programs are carried forward in a co-ordinated and planned way. ARDA seeks always to achieve the best possible combination of public investment and participation by the local people. ARDA seeks the most efficient investment for basic improvement of the region's capacity to provide a sound base for the economy. There is no thought of making transfer payments or creating employment by artificial means. Investments are selected and priority is given to projects which will achieve the maximum effect within the human resources and financial resources which are available.

The special fund for rural economic development will be employed to finance development and adjustment programs which cannot be financed by other public programs, whether federal, provincial or joint programs, including the normal ARDA program. The fund will be applied on the basis of joint agreements with the provinces which will set forth the strategy for development of the area and will outline the development program and the arrangements to carry it out. Provinces in the process of developing plans for application of the fund include Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

The approach now being considered offers promise of greatly improving the situation in certain low income rural regions of Canada. It is doubtful that any other program approach could succeed within a reasonable time. The fund for rural economic development will be administered by the rural development administration of the Department of Forestry, which also administers the ARDA program. The fund is intended to finance certain rural development projects and programs under comprehensive rural development plans for certain problem areas. The fund will be employed to implement such plans in special rural development areas which are rural areas that warrant a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach to economic and social development because they are subject to widespread low income and have major adjustment problems but have recognized developmental potentials.