

Rural Development

annual return of less than \$5,000 from the sale of their produce. More than 40 per cent of them sell less than \$1,200 worth of produce annually and they certainly are in dire need.

I believe the south shore of the St. Lawrence is the minister's own area and I presume one reason it is being given immediate attention is his complete knowledge of the people and conditions in that area. The minister mentioned the Magdalen Islands and the Gaspé area where conditions are the same, and that area does need assistance.

• (4:50 p.m.)

Incidentally the minister will have a great deal of difficulty in my opinion in developing a program in much of that area which will provide a solution to the problems of the people there because the problems they face involve the distance of the farms, even if they are economic, from the market and also the ability of the soil to produce diversified farm products. There is also the fact that educational standards in this area, as in many agricultural areas, are far below the national level and certainly much below the requirements which we believe are necessary for agricultural communities if they are to develop and place themselves on a firm base.

This raises the second point, Mr. Speaker, the matter of education. In Canada we find that our rural population is not in a good position to attain a reasonable or decent standard of living. So far as the agricultural population of Canada is concerned, educational standards are far below what is desirable and really needed for agricultural purposes. In my own riding we have a compact agricultural area in the little clay belt and I know that education in this rural area is almost nil. It is true that the children go to urban schools now and receive a fairly good education in a general sense, but not in the sense of equipping them to operate a farm. In order to be economic, a farm today has to be in the production range of \$40,000 to \$100,000. The type of education required to keep the books for this kind of unit, to make the necessary purchases and do the marketing, is not available.

It is quite true that the agricultural college at Guelph and some of the other agricultural schools throughout the province have provided limited leadership training for some of the farm people, but most of the young farmers have neither the money nor the time to leave home to obtain the type of education they

need. I think the minister will have to consider the whole problem of education because it is high time we recognized the fact that it is no longer sufficient just to have a pair of overalls and get up at six o'clock in the morning and go to bed at ten o'clock at night after working all that time in order to be able to make a living. Farmers do that now and do not make a living. There are many people who are working as hard as they can and are giving of their best in an effort to make a success of their farm operation but are not able to do so simply because they have not had the education.

In order to farm well and make a reasonable income a great deal more training is necessary in many fields than has been given. I know this is a fact. When I am at the farm at New Liskeard which my father and brother operate I see my father sitting at his desk drawing pictures of cattle for registration purposes, working out his record of milk production, deciding whether or not he got beaten on the surplus milk price in relation to his quota for fluid milk or deciding how best to take advantage of the income tax structure of the federal government about this time of the year.

An hon. Member: Or reading *Hansard*.

Mr. Peters: I do not think he has time to read *Hansard*. I believe that 25 years ago this type of work was not necessary. Most farmers got along quite well if they had sufficient products to sell so that they were able to pay their debts at the rural store. If they were able to break even, they were all right; if not, they had to do a little better. If they went in the hole, the bank manager told them about it. Today, even with the very large loans provided and the other facilities available, they are in serious trouble.

I think one of the main problems of the farmers is their inability to duplicate what has been done in the field of industrial development in this country through retraining and technical training to qualify people for specific jobs in industry. We have failed to do this in the agricultural field. Innovations are being practised by farmers which, had the proper education been available, they would know had been tried and had been found unsuccessful.

As I have said many times, the ARDA program really represents the future for agriculture in Canada. It also is the future for a number of other aspects of our renewable resources. It can really provide the future for