

Adjournment Debate

society, and attempting to minimize negative consequences of future urban and industrial development.

The Department of Labour's new Canadian centre for occupational health and safety will be the federal focal point for work toward improvement of conditions relative to health and safety in the work place.

Of course, the provinces and the professional and private agencies play an essential role in health promotion. Co-operative activity is guided by a new federal-provincial advisory committee in this area. Examples of provincial approaches which parallel those at the federal level are "Action B.C." and the Saskatchewan "Feeling Good" programs. Other provinces have similar trusts. The success of provincial traffic safety programs has been widely acclaimed.

In all these activities the key to success is giving each individual a sense of responsibility for his or her health.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION—DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words tonight regarding a question I put to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) a few days ago concerning a rural development agreement for Northern Ontario. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, there was a forestry agreement signed between the province of Ontario and the federal government a couple of weeks ago, which is designed to bring that industry to its full potential. There has also been an indication from the minister that there would be a rural development agreement signed as well.

This is very significant because the ARDA agreement, which has been in effect for the past few years, has had very significant benefits for many areas in northern Ontario, like the Algoma-Manitoulin area. Programs such as the farm enlargement program have been carried out under this, and at least in the Manitoulin area some 70 farms were purchased and assistance has been given to young farmers to expand their operations, bringing them to more economic sizes. Some four large community pastures were established to provide more pasturing for the beef industry there, and something like 27,000 or 30,000 acres in total have been purchased in relation to the farm enlargement program and the community pasture program, and this has been combined with improved herd sires to upgrade the beef industry. As well, co-operative livestock sales have been established at Thessalon and at Little Current, with some assistance from ARDA.

There has been the development as well of two meat packing plants, one at Bruce Mines and one at Spring Bay on Manitoulin Island. There has also been an improvement under the program so that farmers cannot only market through this co-operative sales mechanism, but as well can have meat processed in these plants. It also provided assistance for farm drainage training programs such as the business of farming courses.

[Mr. Robinson.]

• (2212)

A fish packing plant was constructed with ARDA assistance at Mamainse Point north of Sault Ste. Marie on Lake Superior. Likewise, the tourist industry has also benefited from this program which has provided waterfront property for communities like Meldrum Bay, Gore Bay, Kagawong, Little Current and Manitowaning. Also, a number of community trailer camps have been constructed at Gore Bay, Garden River and Meldrum Bay. These camp grounds are providing tourist facilities for those communities. There are also the community parks in Johnson Township and Bridal Vail Falls which have been constructed under the ARDA program.

I am providing this information as background because I want the minister to be aware of how important this program has been in our area over the past few years. It is easy after these activities have been carried out to forget how important they are.

I would like to pay tribute to one person, Mr. Joe Brown, the rural development officer in the area from 1967 to 1974. His territory included not only the Manitoulin Algoma area, but also northern Ontario. Later on he had six counsellors working with him. He did a great deal to make this program a success, and had the ability to take a good idea and work with governments and with the people. He had some spectacular achievements with regard to ARDA projects.

What we must look at as the minister signs this new agreement with the province of Ontario are the really worthwhile projects which have been carried out under ARDA and which still have some life left in them. We should retain the best parts of that program where there is still work to be carried out. I would like to see a multimillion dollar, five-year rural development agreement with the province of Ontario. The minister has indicated that it would be signed before the end of this fiscal year.

This program should feature aspects relating to helping young people get started in agriculture, provide for more expanded and diversified production, assist in the tourist industry to provide improved facilities and develop that industry in northern Ontario, which has so much potential.

I think there should be a manufacturing component in this program to provide for diversification and processing in our manufacturing industries to process further our basic resources in northern Ontario, such as agriculture, mining, and forestry.

It seems to me that there should be consultation with the members of parliament from northern Ontario and with the people of the area to ensure that this program is all encompassing and meets our needs to develop fully our natural resources which I have mentioned. Only in this way can we reach our full potential and develop the resources which we have at this time.

Mr. Donald Wood (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I can fully understand and appreciate the concern of the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) because he is certainly one of the most dedicated members in this House when it comes to the con-