

However, with this constitutional fact clearly in mind, I believe strongly that the federal ARDA administration can and must provide a large element of initiative and leadership.

FEDERAL INITIATIVE

At the federal level of government, we must put more emphasis on economic and social planning. For a programme to develop rationally, it must be related to a defined government policy, and thus be capable of systematic integration with other programmes with broadly similar objectives. The rural problem is not separate and distinct from the social and economic problems of the various major regions and of the country as a whole. And it follows that policies and programmes which are designed to solve rural problems must be integrated with more general economic and social development programmes. Otherwise, we work in a fragmented way, often at cross purposes. I hope and believe that the ARDA programme will prove, at the federal level of government, to provide a basis for considerable integration and co-ordination of Federal Government programmes. Efforts are constantly being made to achieve this objective, in part through continual informal liaison among departmental officials, and in part through formal interdepartmental committees of senior officials. Eventually, we may perhaps aspire to comprehensive economic planning by the Central Government of all its activities, followed by a co-ordination of federal and provincial planning. But the capability for integrated regional planning rests largely with the provinces.

At the provincial level, in all provinces, similar networks leading to improved liaison and co-ordination have been established, and the results are apparent everywhere.

There is, however, need for more than this, if we aspire to serious, hard-driving and effective programmes within the regions of extreme disadvantage which I have alluded to.

As I mentioned, the General ARDA agreement of 1962 will terminate at the end of April 1965. Shortly after I became Minister of Forestry last February, I and officials of the ARDA administration had discussions with all provincial ministers responsible for ARDA, and with many provincial officials concerned with rural development. We did this in order to discover what deficiencies there may be in the present general agreement, so that these deficiencies might be corrected. We have drafted a proposal for a new ARDA agreement to cover the programme from 1965 to 1970. And we have submitted this proposal to the provinces for consideration. Late in November, a federal-provincial conference will be held in Montreal to give all ARDA ministers and their senior staffs a chance to review and criticize the proposed agreement.

PROPOSED NEW AGREEMENT

Quite naturally, I am unable to discuss the proposed agreement in detail at this time. However, in general terms, I am able to outline the general concepts on which the proposal is based.

It seems necessary that the ARDA programme emphasize land-use adjustment. There should be

programmes aimed specifically at consolidation of low-income farms. This process would, of course, occur sporadically over a generation or two, whether governments do anything or not. But, since rural poverty arises in large part from the existence of close to 180,000 low-income farms, concrete action seems essential. It seems expedient and necessary to establish programmes of land acquisition and disposal, to rationalize the economies of individual farms. This implies the need for special farm credit, improved training in farm management, vocational and technical training for those who may leave the farms, and re-establishment allowances. It is no solution to the problem of rural low-income merely to cause the rural poor to become the urban poor.

There are regions which suffer from extreme conditions of social and economic disadvantage. Here it will be necessary to create employment opportunities through development of resources, and through stimulation of industry where this is economically feasible. There will be need for park development, forest improvement, water-resource development, processing and service industries, and all other means which ingenuity and strong purpose can devise. Even this will not be enough. Education is essential. With its help, regional development can be improved to a degree. If the degree is not sufficient, assistance in moving to more favourable opportunities can be provided. It will be evident to all, of course, that direct participation by the Federal Government — except financial participation — is not possible. However, we are prepared to accommodate the federal ARDA administration to provincial needs for assistance in carrying their programme forward. I am particularly interested in assisting in the establishment of training facilities for community development officers. Skilled fieldmen are essential to any intensive rural development programme.

Another major requirement is mobility of labour. There are areas of extreme poverty and poor resources which cannot be expected to respond to any "inputs" of capital, resource development, or other feasible measures. Intensive training programmes and suitable re-establishment programmes are essential.

Now these are ambitious programmes. If they are to be successful, it must be on the basis of inter-departmental co-operation and planning in both federal and provincial governments, with due co-ordination between federal and provincial governments. Even more important, carefully-planned community development work is necessary, to inform local citizens and involve their organizations in the successive steps required for the solution of rural problems in their area. A great deal of thinking and work must go into this. Training facilities for specialists in community development are almost non-existent in Canada. We must do something about this.

The traditional way of thinking about people who are enmeshed in poverty must change. We have little experience in the kind of "operation bootstrap" that has been effective in other countries. We in government must learn how to do the job, and the citizens themselves must learn how to organize for effective action within the context of the provincial rural development programmes....