

country unnecessary, to allow back-breaking work to be continued when it is so obvious that it cannot yield a decent family livelihood to those who engage in that work.

I say that should not be continued, because we are blessed by Providence in this country with such great and valuable resources that any man's consistent arduous work could and should provide him with adequate returns to secure for himself and his dependents a decent livelihood, provided that work is applied to the right job in the appropriate setting.

May I quote one more paragraph from the Prime Minister's speech? He went on to say:

I am convinced that some of the land in eastern Canada that hard-working Canadians are trying to use as farms should go back to forest and water conservation uses and those attempting to live on them resettled in more rewarding surroundings.

The preliminary report of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects points out that between 1946 and 1955 the physical volume of output per farm and per man-hour has very substantially increased while the number employed in agriculture dropped by nearly one-third. I quote directly from the report:

Over a long period of time the average incomes of agricultural workers (farmers, family labour and hired labour) were generally lower than the incomes of other producers, except for fishermen.

This is to be noted:

But during the last ten years, the real earnings of agricultural workers have improved considerably, both absolutely and in comparison with the earnings of workers in other occupations.

This is a heartening conclusion, but one of our chief concerns now, when we are instituting the comprehensive study proposed, is to see whether those farmers who are not sharing as they should in this general advance could benefit from some rearrangement of land use. Our endeavour, I suggest, should be to work out some long-term constructive answer to the problem which the proposed committee is to study.

In his speech giving the broad background of the land-use problem with which it is suggested a Senate committee could usefully deal, the honourable senator from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Bois) emphasized that this is a subject in which our Governments have always been interested. He emphasized, too, that research into agricultural policies must take account of their social and national features.

May I say a word here to remind honourable senators that under our Constitution agriculture is one of those areas in which the Parliament of Canada as well as the provincial Legislatures may both make laws. There can be no doubt that any comprehensive study of land use will have to range widely across the Canadian scene, but much of the information that the proposed committee will take under advisement will come

from the provincial departments of agriculture. The pattern of land use varies widely, as honourable senators know, from province to province.

The quotations from the Prime Minister's speech and the paragraph that I read from the Speech from the Throne represent therefore, in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of all honourable senators, a very proper and timely concern for a problem which has many overlapping provincial and national aspects. It is only appropriate that ideas about the better use of land in this country—important as that is for all citizens—should be looked into by both levels of Government whose duty it is to legislate in such matters and from whom our fellow citizens quite naturally expect close co-operation in the examination and solution of problems of such national extent and significance.

Honourable senators, as we look back over the years, as the honourable senator from Montarville reminded us, besides the trend away from the farm as fewer farmers with more machinery and better techniques have been able to produce the food that Canada needed or that could be sold by this country abroad, we see a second trend, the gradual movement away from marginal farms either to take employment in the towns and cities or to find some other farms or new land that could provide a more adequate income.

I am sure that no member of the committee or of this house will want anyone to leave farming who could find a decent living in this honourable field of human endeavour. For all of us realize how attached a farmer becomes to his own land, to his own locality and to the friends and relatives who live around him. Certainly, our first thought must be of measures for the rehabilitation of the less productive farm, wherever that is found justified in the light of all the circumstances. No farmer would want to consider moving to "fresh woods and pastures new" unless it is evident that his present farm cannot be made sufficiently productive for his needs and those of his family.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: And even then it is difficult to get him to move away from home. There is no place like home.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: I quite agree that there is no place like home. As I said, I do not think any member of this committee or this house would suggest to any farmer that he should move from his home if he can make a reasonable living on his farm by a reasonable amount of work. The purpose of this committee will not be to induce farmers to become dissatisfied with their homes and their land.