

Supply—Mr. W. H. A. Thomas

There are more small farmers in this country than there are large farmers. There are people on farms today who have little aptitude for any other line of work. A farmer practises a variety of skills. At one period he is a carpenter, at another a plumber or a motor mechanic. He improvises, he invents; but he cannot qualify as a professional in anything. He fits into the job he is doing, the job of farming, better than any other job that could be suggested.

Many of these small farmers particularly are unable to make a living from their land holdings and are taking part time jobs in industry to supplement their farm incomes. They and their families enjoy the advantages of rural life and are prepared to accept a comparatively low standard of living rather than leave the farm. To separate them from the way of life they know and love would be both unwise and uneconomic.

Our present rural development legislation, which includes ARDA and the Farm Credit Corporation, discriminates against the part time farmer. There is no use of a part time farmer asking for a loan from the Farm Credit Corporation because he cannot get it. The Farm Credit Corporation has been set up and devised to organize land holdings into economic farm units and for the small, part time farmer it offers no assistance. I think this is wrong.

There is talk of getting these small farmers out of the farm picture but I suggest that any program which separates the farmer from his land and from his farm life should be approached with the greatest caution. I believe the combination of working a small farm and part time industrial work should be recognized as a way of life in our rural communities and that a place for these people should be made under the provisions of the Farm Credit Corporation and ARDA. Loans and assistance should be provided not only for economic farm units but to raise the standard of living of the part time farmer. The smallholding farm operation should be recognized as a new way of life; they are becoming more numerous in all parts of this country.

To stress the atmosphere which surrounds the farmer and his land I am going to borrow some words from a little poem that has been around our home for a long while. I do not

know where it came from and there is no name attached to it. It says:

There's work on a farm from dawn till night,
Work by sun and candle light,
But there's health on a farm, and gladness, too,
And a pride no city folk ever knew.
A pride in seeing the seed you sow
Wake and rise and lift and grow;
A pride in being, when harvest's done,
An equal partner with rain and sun.

I am also going to quote from a speech by Hon. Maurice Sauvé, Minister of Forestry, to the Empire club in Toronto. The hon. gentleman gave the history of several farm families in trying to indicate the problems these people have in carrying on. With regard to one family called the Adams family—I believe the names are fictitious but the circumstances are correct—he said:

The Adams family live on a farm in Lanark County, Ontario. They are not yet middle aged and have two young children. Their home is an eight-room log house about one hundred years old and in poor condition. It is heated by a box stove and wood-burning kitchen stove. Water is obtained from an outdoor hand pump, and there are no inside toilet facilities. There is electricity and telephone and the family have a car. They live some distance from town—the high school is twenty miles away, as are the doctor and the hospital.

The income of the family is \$35 per person per month. Mrs. Adams has a Grade 12 education and a commercial course, and works for the local township authorities. Her present work involves keeping municipal books and is done in her own home.

• (6:30 p.m.)

Apparently she is the township clerk or the treasurer.

Mr. Adams has a Grade 6 education and worked as a labourer for about three months last winter in addition to his farm operation. In fact, his earnings from this have helped to support the farm, which showed a loss in 1964. The farm is about one hundred acres, of which only 35 acres are under cultivation and Mr. Adams has to rent pasture. He has fourteen cows and he markets calves and milk. The Adams also raise pigs for their own use. They still have two old horses which are used for cutting hay.

The Adams are not satisfied with their life, owing to the level of income. However, they are doubtful that if the family moved to another area, that Mr. Adams could manage a larger farm operation or support his family adequately in some other employment.

Here you have the point I want to make. In most cases these people on small holdings across this country do not wish to move. They are reluctant to move. They fear they will be worse off than they are at the moment. The article continues:

It would be difficult to sell his present farm and there is no good land available nearby to add to it. The price he would receive if he could sell it would be inadequate as a basis for a new start elsewhere.