

Rural Development

Welfare Council and several members have already done so. That document outlines the life of 300 Canadian families whose members are for the most part honest and very hard-working people. A thousand similar reports could be prepared without giving the full picture of the situation of those unhappy people who fight to survive in our society where affluence prevails in general.

Mr. Caouette: Hear, hear.

Mr. Sauvé: How is it then that those people are reduced to almost total helplessness in a society which is well organized and generally effective?

Mr. Caouette: But badly organized.

Mr. Sauvé: Why are so many people in rural areas living in poverty? I do not think that is because of character deficiencies or lack of personal initiative. It is due rather to the lack of a rational and organized way of dealing with the present potentialities in rural areas.

Mr. Caouette: Especially the pocketbook.

Mr. Sauvé: The federal program called ARDA can and wants to support the provincial efforts aimed at solving problems of that kind throughout Canada. A great deal of progress has already been made.

It would be tragic, however, if Canada acted too late and did too little to really succeed in bringing a higher standard of living to the rural population. Most important human values are concerned. Such values are not only the obvious and negative aspects of human misery.

If we, that is all the other Canadians, walk the other way, feeling that it is not our responsibility to organize our society in order to serve the have-nots among us, our lack of interest will have repercussions on the vitality of our society. If we cannot do it, what can we really expect?

There is another side to the question which we cannot forget. It is true that the country's production and consumption potential shows, at the present time, a heavy decline because hundreds of rural areas are at a standstill, underdeveloped and underproductive. That potential could certainly be evaluated at several billion dollars.

[*English*]

The statistics on rural poverty which have been assembled and published in map form

Percentage of rural population of school age or over, but not attending school, whose highest grade attended is Grade 8 or less

Percentage of male rural non-farm wage-earners earning under \$2,000 a year

Province	%	%
Newfoundland	53	72
Prince Edward Island	52	58
Nova Scotia	40	58
New Brunswick	48	72
Atlantic Region	45	63
Quebec	40	77
Ontario	24	59
Manitoba	31	64
Saskatchewan	33	61
Alberta	26	57
British Columbia	19	46
Western Region	24	56
Canada	32	64

Absolute total for Canada	men	people
	203,666	2,078,591

Mr. Sauvé: These figures were, of course, based on the census of 1961. However, it would be optimistic to assume that the absolute figures have altered substantially for the better. Children in many rural regions still grow up with few opportunities, and the great technological revolution in agriculture and the other primary industries has by no means run its course.

[*Translation*]

I would like to explain, briefly, Mr. Speaker, what those statistics mean when they are taken out of the cold generalities formulated by the statistician.

Those statistics show that, in rural areas, half a million families live in poverty, that is over 2 million Canadians.

I am calling on some remarks included in the report of a study made recently for ARDA by the Canadian Welfare Council. Those statistics show the existence of poverty that is not due to a moral failure but to a lack of possibilities and outlets in rural areas.

One could find that out easily by reading the 200 pages of the report of the Canadian