

Rural Development

them. Whatever programs we create, they will give nothing if we do not guarantee the sale of agricultural products in Canada.

• (9:20 p.m.)

This is the only way. Besides, it is the only method followed by this government and even by former governments, to assist agriculture in western Canada. The sale of wheat was guaranteed in the west; let us do the same thing in the east. We do not know what to do with foodstuffs, we are afraid of a surplus. Let us build refrigerated storage instead of paying inspectors to go and find the poor. Let us build refrigerated storage to store foodstuffs in case the people of the world would need them and, of course, first the people of Canada, our country that we are developing and building.

Mr. Speaker, this ARDA plan as that assistance to redevelopment is called: An Act to provide for the establishment of a fund for the economic and social development of special rural development areas. All areas are special in eastern Canada.

The hon. member for Charlevoix mentioned that in his area, the government is not too quick to help fight poverty and he insisted on the fact that his riding is a wonderful touristic area, that the minister should tour his county in order to assess the possibilities for a tourist industry. He is right, that is a beautiful area. However, I would like to point out to the hon. member that the finest lakes for fishing are located in my area and also the best trout. This is why each year Americans and a good number of Canadian citizens come to my riding. But this is not the answer to the problem.

Mr. Speaker, the matter of farming does not concern only one group in a riding, it concerns all farmers.

I want to speak again of my area. It has good fertile lands. We do not have only sheds, log cabins as some would want to believe or try to make us believe, but there are agricultural opportunities in Abitibi. This is proven by the fact that Abitibi has existed since 1908, 1909. People who live there all the time have not always worked in mines; they lived off agriculture during the years 1920, 1921, 1922. The first mine to be opened in the north, at Rouyn, dates back to 1925, when the Noranda mine started its operations. In the Amos and LaSarre areas, we had farming and forests. The land was beautiful and our farmers had big herds in Abitibi as elsewhere in other provinces.

But, when sales in the dairy industry no longer pay the farmers, when costs of dairy

products exceed selling prices, everyone can understand why the farmers want to get rid of their herds. When it cost more to fatten a pig than it brings in, can the farmer or producer be blamed for doing so?

Farmers are forever being blamed: he has no talent, he does not have enough education. All sorts of nonsense is spoken about the farmers but, Mr. Speaker, I say so again before closing, the only way to help them and the rural people, in every province throughout Canada, is to guarantee the sale of their products.

Let us put an end to expenses in search of the poor, and instead, let us find a way to sell their products and encourage the farmers. You will see that the settlers, the farmers are able to organize their production according to the demand. All the government has to do is see that the products are sold. The farmers do not need the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), nor the hon. Minister of Forests, nor ARDA, to tell them what to produce when there is a demand and they are sure of selling their products.

You will see that farmers can organize production when they feel it is possible to sell their produce. And the same thing goes for stock breeders and dairy farmers. If there is a chance for milk sales to double, herds will be doubled within a few years. Two hundred and five hundred acres will not be needed.

A farm of 100 acres can provide livelihood for a family. It has done so in the past when there was a chance to sell its produce. You will see that the family farm could survive and be profitable to the farmer, and thereby to the whole of Canada, for, at long last, we will have brought balance to the economic life of the farmer, and he will stand on an equal footing with other classes of Canadian society.

Mr. Jean Berger (Montmagny-L'Islet): Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that those who are familiar with the riding of Montmagny-L'Islet cannot but warmly and sincerely welcome this bill introduced by the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Sauvé) and entitled: an act to provide for the establishment of a fund for the economic and social development of special rural development areas.

If you allow me a little aside before starting my remarks, I should like to call attention to a remark of the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette). He attempts to condemn this bill by suggesting that funds