

*Rural Development*

Let us stop driving off a farmer with thirty years of experience and sending him into town to be on relief. Let us start by keeping him there for a few years, let us try to establish him, for the time being. I feel this is the worst we can do today, it is very poor tolerance. I note that the Government does not find it so. It is absolutely necessary that ARDA look to the old farm families to give them the necessary help.

I must admit that something has been done in the last three years, but in my area, particularly in Quebec, I think too much has been done—here again, I am not blaming any one, I am simply making the point to the minister—too much has been done on the study of each problem.

In other words, we have had the satisfaction of studying the percentage of our poverty and of crying over it. Even if more tears were to be shed on our poverty, this would not change anything.

• (5:30 p.m.)

It is all very well to study poverty, but others things are pressing, not only now, but they have been pressing for three years. Under ARDA, moneys have been granted—and I spoke of this before—for blueberry fields. If, at least, these subsidies had been properly organized to protect the family farm, as I was saying, instead of sending the families into town. Up to \$95 were given to build blueberries fields on crown lands, uncultivated land where there was nothing at all. Yet, one of the aims of ARDA—the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton) said so a while ago—is the use of cultivated lands. That is one of the aims of ARDA.

Grants were being made and it was under a provincial program; besides, I discussed the matter with the minister. It is obvious that everything cannot be controlled from here, in Ottawa, but I think the minister has a part to play; he can at least give advice. Blueberry unions were formed only with small-time friends of the party as members; they had their share of the grants and paid settlers and farmers \$25, \$30 or \$35 and pocketed the \$80.

In fact, I met the Quebec minister concerned and told him that if he could afford to give \$70, he should give it to those farmers, in so far as they improved blueberry patches.

If this had been done, perhaps they could have saved 25 or 30 per cent of the land of those farmers who now live in the city on social welfare.

They boast that unemployment no longer exists. The minister has just said: "We have

[Mr. Gauthier.]

33 per cent unemployment." For our part, we have 30 to 40 per cent who live on social welfare in our region. And the provincial minister tours the province boasting: "There is no more unemployment."

I tell you that those words are not quite plain. I refer to the Quebec minister when he says that there is no more unemployment.

**Mr. Lachance:** The good Quebec minister.

**Mr. Gauthier:** I do not want to talk too much about him. However, the facts are there.

But ARDA money must absolutely help the farmer. Let us stop making studies, let us stop pouring everything into study groups.

I read also in the bill that an advisory board consisting of ten senior officials would be appointed. I am filled with apprehension when I see such a board consisting of ten senior officials but not one single member of the area, not one single member of the UCC Catholic Farmers' Union. It is interesting to have officials; there should be five officials and five members of the area, five members from the Catholic Farmers' Union, of the parish council that is where information should be sought. If you want to be useful, you must seek information. If you want to know the actual situation in an area, you will achieve nothing with ten men, ten bureaucrats from Ottawa; these officials know nothing of the Roberval area.

For instance, appoint in your advisory board, members of the Catholic Farmers' Union, members of the Council for Economic Orientation and of the council of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean. Even the member of parliament will be able to give you good information. We are elected by the people, as you are. Why leave us aside? We are elected to work for the people. Do you think it is because we are in the opposition that we will allow anything to be done without saying a word? On the contrary. We are here to protect the interests of the people and you can be sure that we will protect them.

Now we are told that there is much to be done. There remains a great deal to do—and I want to close on this thought—to save the family farm.

I hope the minister is not in favour of the principle of the community farms, because I would not agree at all.

He has succeeded in trying out this system of community farms, but we are now coming back to family farms. A direction must be given to save the family farm; the family lot