

*Rural Development*

tremendous benefit to the locality. I am wondering whether we could look into this aspect of the matter in our search for assisting these local people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is one other fact of which we must never lose sight, and that is that this nation and the world more and more each day is approaching a crisis in the search for edibles to feed the multitudes of people on this planet. More and more we are becoming conscious of the fact that the people who live in the so-called have-not nations are not going to be satisfied with the low calorie diet which has been forced upon them through the years. They are not going to be satisfied to see their populations decimated every year or so by famine. They too are becoming knowledgeable and know there are areas where there is abundance; but unfortunately areas of abundance are becoming fewer and fewer every year. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, in the last few years some of these so-called exporting nations are becoming importing nations because they do not produce enough food themselves to feed their own populations. So we must never lose sight of this fact.

In addition, we should never develop a policy which to any degree removes arable land from cultivation and out of the over-all concept of producing as much food as possible. Food and water are the two most important commodities of human resources Canada will have for the future. These are two commodities we must produce in abundance; and in my humble opinion as far as ARDA is concerned our program must be directed toward this production.

How do we do this, Mr. Speaker? I think we must provide a tremendous amount of money for the research which is necessary to bring these so-called designated poverty areas up to a production never before thought possible. This is done by producing grains which have a shorter growing season or which have a higher protein value; grains which can be grown in soil which cannot produce grain today. By the use of proper planting methods we must extend our growing areas further and further afield and produce food more successfully.

We must not only develop these areas but must employ the necessary technicians to show our farmers how this food may be grown, how cattle may be raised, and how poultry may be reared on a limited acreage to provide that living for our families which is necessary. The people will learn by example.

If, under this scheme as set out, the government intends to take area farms or a township or county in any segment of the country, and carefully husband all of the resources available—as was so ably pointed out by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton)—analyse them and see what can be done, and by going into such areas show the rest of Canada that we not only have the desire at the federal level but the ability and knowledge to increase the living standards of these people, regardless of whether they are on the farms, in the related industries or in small factories, then if we do raise the living standards of an entire area which is suffering from poverty today the people of Canada will take heart and support such a bill as that brought in by the minister.

However, if we find that the enthusiasm of the minister, when it is filtered down through the various bureaus and committees to the grass roots level, is nothing less than lip service, then we are doing the people of Canada a disservice in this type of legislation. I have hopes that this bill will be the beginning and not the end. As has been pointed out by other speakers in this house, the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the minister, not only as to the manner in which he administers this bill, but in the way he provides the enthusiasm and drive behind it.

• (7:10 p.m.)

If he can do this, if he can make the people enthusiastic about it, if he can keep out partisan politics and keep out everything that would distract from the accomplishment of the purposes set out in the bill—if he does nothing else, he will have performed a great service to the people of this nation. This is what the people of Canada are waiting to see; this is what the people of Canada expect from a government. The people have a right to this; they have a right to expect this kind of administration. Surely the minister is in a position now to meet this challenge.

I think the minister grasped the concept of this when he carefully analysed the problem. I hope, after serious consideration, that the legislation he proposes is correct. If the minister has considered this legislation, and if his associates in the department have carefully considered it, and applied themselves, not just to treating it as another act of parliament, as window dressing for political purposes, but to making it work as something designed to help the poor areas of Canada, it will not only have the support of all sides of the house, but it will have the support of that