

*The Address—Mr. Stefanson*

national joint provincial-federal committee. Planning and action must be primarily local; the kind of action taken will depend on local resources and conditions.

While success depends upon local leadership, a national program directorate is essential for research, assistance in selecting personnel, and financing co-ordination of plans of various local programs, and to record and make available the experience of local programs to other local areas. The leadership must be primarily under the control of the provincial-federal directorate.

4. The co-operation of provincial governments, universities, farm organizations, and other bodies, is essential, but it is important that the national program directorate take the lead in co-ordinating any activities of these bodies. It would be undesirable to have several unco-ordinated programs proceeding simultaneously and in isolation, under provincial, university or other leadership. The national directorate should maintain the position of leadership in all activities which are not local.

5. The program may at times be closely related to other federal programs such as the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, the Maritime Rehabilitation Act and the farm credit corporation, as well as, of course, to provincial extension and educational programs.

6. It must be recognized at the outset that the problems of marginal areas and of programs developed to relieve these problems will be social as much as economic, political or technological. This in itself makes it essential to regard the program as a long run one, and to recognize the difficulties which it will encounter.

I take it that a national interdepartmental committee will be formed to work with a provincial interdepartmental committee to receive suggestions from the various regions of the country. The provincial agricultural minister becomes the person through whom ideas are funnelled and he is also the person who is expected to encourage the local communities to embark upon an assessment of resources and possibilities for development. As I said before, this act is a real challenge. It is a challenge to farmers and people living in small villages and towns. Let us get busy and dream up suggestions for projects which could be implemented under this act.

The resources for tomorrow conference took place in Montreal last October and there were about 700 experts in attendance who discussed resource management. Among the resources discussed were agriculture, forests, wild life, water, fisheries and recreation. Many of the topics discussed at this conference and much of the information gathered can be of direct benefit to those who will be charged with the administration of A.R.D.A. It can likewise give inspiration and suggestions to those who are seeking ideas and projects.

I am pleased to note that the resources for tomorrow conference steering committee has now been set up on a permanent basis and will be known as the resources ministers council. The aim of the council will be to

improve intergovernmental liaison and co-ordination in the field of renewable resources.

Mr. Speaker, I have in my hand a copy of the *Selkirk Enterprise* dated March 8, 1961. The heading on page 3 is "Cunningham Visualizes Edmonton to Selkirk Water Highway."

Mr. Cunningham is a resident of Selkirk, Manitoba, and until his recent retirement was in charge of all dredging operations for the federal government in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Mr. Cunningham, when speaking to the Selkirk chamber of commerce, outlined his plan for a water highway from Edmonton on the Saskatchewan river to Grand Rapids, down lake Winnipeg and up the Red river to Selkirk and Winnipeg. It was evident that Mr. Cunningham was talking about a subject with which he is familiar, and also that he has carried out a great deal of research work on this topic. It is also a topic in which he believes, and he feels it would be practical to make it a reality.

Whenever new ideas are advanced there are some who immediately say that those ideas are ridiculous and nonsensical and that the man responsible for them is a day dreamer. I am sure that when the St. Lawrence seaway was suggested there were those who said the project was nonsense. After the idea had been advanced it no doubt took a long time to stir up interest in it and to convince people of the possibilities. Later, extensive surveys were required to determine whether the project would be of sufficient benefit to warrant the spending of public money. I have no quarrel with that. I do think it is important that this type of project be given careful study. I agree one has to be convinced of the over-all benefit to the country as a whole before public moneys are spent. I merely point this out because I am sure that throughout history whenever a progressive idea has been advanced there were those who referred to it as absurd. However, one should remember that the man advancing the idea has given study to the topic while those who criticize have usually not given the matter any thought or consideration, which is why they offer the kind of criticism I have mentioned. I am one of those who believe that whenever someone suggests a project, particularly when that project is imaginative and visionary, one should look at it carefully and give it every consideration.

The suggested program of Mr. Cunningham is one which, I believe, comes in that category. It certainly is imaginative; likewise, it is visionary. One can visualize this type of project leading to the development of the northern ports of the three prairie