

*Rural Development*

course, primarily it is rural assistance. I have here a letter from a farmer who was hard pressed, like thousands of other farmers in Canada today. I should like to quote two lines, where he says:

We don't want to be able to borrow a lot of money from the government to live on; we want to be able to earn it.

This is what we should get from this legislation, an opportunity for the farmers and the working people to earn, so that they do not have to sign huge mortgages and commit themselves for the rest of their lives to debt. All they want is just a little help. Every rural area, with help from ARDA perhaps can turn the tide economically for these farmers. This man also says:

Most farmers I know wouldn't be able to pay interest on \$30,000 or \$40,000, let alone paying on principal.

That of course is true. He says:

In our community a large percentage of farmers or their wives are working off the farm because they can't survive on the income the farm brings; however they are still producing milk, beef and pork and they are doing it at a loss because they don't depend on the farm any more for a living.

So much for the case in respect of ARDA, and for the speedy going ahead with what is meant by the words of this act. From my observation of the areas adjacent to my own area, I know that rural Canada needs development of our watersheds for the conservation of water. Not so far away from Ottawa where the minister, I hope can go and see it at first hand is the development of the Napanee valley. The Napanee river, of course, is a river which runs mostly in the counties of Frontenac and Lennox and into the Bay of Quinte and Lake Ontario. I am sure the minister knows where it is.

Rural Canada needs, first, development of all our watersheds for the conservation of water; second, reforestation of adaptable forest lands in a productive manner to ensure continuous annual production of timber and wood products after a certain long-term growth period; third, in the areas of these watersheds where soil is suitable for agriculture, clearing and restoration of the old fields must take place; fourth, grants for the use of heavy machinery for land clearing, such as clearing of principally scrub brush, must be available, and also for tile drainage of these cleared fields where this type of drainage is necessary.

In addition grants, then, in turn, are needed for fertilizer and any other services necessary to put these lands into production. Fifth,

in turning these regions of our country into productive lands, which now are unproductive or close to being a non-productive liability, we need the advice and services of our top engineers, agricultural scientists and silviculturists. The members of the house can see how this will create a tremendous amount of employment, professional employment of a very high calibre, because very high calibre of people are required to help us plant and take care of these plantations. With the type of management which is envisaged, perhaps the farmers will go on farming as they never farmed before on rejuvenated land. Deeds to the land quite properly could be retained by the rural population. There is no advantage to uprooting all the farm population and sending the people to the cities where probably they would have a lower level of living than in the country. They would be able to stay where they are and make a living off land which would be more productive than it formerly was.

Then there is the responsibility of the government, through the ARDA directorates and co-ordinating communities, to render scientific soil and crop adaptability studies, and even marketing adaptability studies, to make sure that the right varieties and species of crops are grown on this rehabilitated land. We are about to celebrate our first centennial, and this ARDA proposition is a long term project; it will take at least half a century to put it into full operation. It made a good start under the Conservative administration. We need not waste time or energy changing the title of the act. Let us go to work and make this proposition develop.

There is also a recreational aspect of ARDA. Already we have recreational interests which are anxious to obtain loans in the Laurentian area. In my office now I have a letter from persons who are interested in starting a skiing establishment on land that is not worth very much now. It is proposed to have ski jumps, trails, mechanical lifts and so on. This is in an area in Renfrew county on marginal land and in a beautiful hilly location. I have referred this suggestion to the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Sauv ), the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene) and the hon. member for Renfrew North (Mr. Hopkins). I hope this type of scheme can come under the scope of this new act and be placed early on the agenda of things that can be done. The operation of these kinds of resorts is an industry which provides employment and can certainly be of assistance to these remote undeveloped regions of our country.