

ments, municipal officials or industry—to form concrete ideas and let our voice be heard. “Sitting back and doing nothing is the worst possible thing the Women’s Institute members can do.” We are a non political body but that doesn’t mean we should not present our views.

Referring to Adelaide Hoodless, she asked, “where would we be today if she had merely stayed home and raised her family?” Mrs. Bielish had just come from a meeting at the Adelaide Hoodless Homestead (a yearly event for the F.W.I.C. President). She concluded by saying, “a president should not come to give a rousing speech, but instead should become part of the group, and learn more about provincial units.”

Greetings from government

Ron McNeil, M.P.P., Parliamentary Assistant to Hon. Bill Newman, Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food brought greetings on behalf of the Ministry saying, “The Women’s Institutes have had a long and honorable record in Ontario, and you all have much to be proud of in the history of the movement.” Rural Ontario would have been a very different place without the dedicated women of the local W.I.’s.

Mr. McNeil spoke about two of the Ministry’s programs which are vital to the viability of Agriculture in Ontario that of Marketing Programs and Foodland Ontario promotion.

He appealed to the W.I. for support of Foodland, not only to prove good things grow in Ontario but good things sell in Ontario. You would be surprised at the number of consumers that are unaware that Ontario is Canada’s number one agricultural province, and yet know about New Zealand lamb, Florida orange juice, B.C. apples. He pointed out the reason they know is because of the excellent promotion.

Foodland’s objectives are three fold. To increase consumer awareness, the importance of Agriculture and increase sales. Promotional assistance has been given to eight marketing boards and four producers associations. Foodland has advertised more than 50 products in five months, which resulted in increased sales.

Turkey sales, because of the Christmas dinner campaign, provided a 3 million pound increase over the previous December. A successful 4-week winter vegetable campaign increased sales from 40-1200 percent. One canner reported a ten fold increase, proving it pays to advertise.

To prove this, the government commissioned a consumer research survey of urban people’s attitudes toward the farming industry and its products. Interviews were carried out among female heads of households of urbanites in communities of over 10,000 persons.

The survey revealed Ontario food quality ranked high, consideration was given to Ontario products when purchasing; no one blamed the farmer for price increase.

Marketing Boards

Mr. McNeil said Marketing Boards have been designed to give the producers a stronger voice in the marketplace. Many producers through the Board’s effort are able to make a decent living.

Exports also increase the sale of our products. Five trade missions were sent to the U.S. resulting in \$12 million worth of business in Ontario commodities. A mission to the Caribbean brought home something like \$15 million.

Of course, the other side of exports is imports. When it comes to imports, Ontario Agriculture is hurting. We import too much of the kind of product we can grow here.

Because of negotiations with the Federal Government, we hope some of our recommendations will be accepted. In today’s world, trade is a complicated business requiring give and take among nations. Just one example (if we are successful around the negotiating table), would be an increase acreage of 5000-10,000 acres of tomatoes and a market could be found right here at home.

The important thing to remember is this just doesn’t benefit farmers. There is a multiplier effect right through the economy—jobs—processing—packaging—sales, etc.

Director

Miss Molly McGhee, Home Economics Branch, thanked the delegates for their great support as leaders or finding leaders for 4-H and senior programs. Women’s Institutes provided 78% last year.

It is important that you continue to support the programs and encourage community ladies to attend.

With reference to the Conference which includes secretary-treasurers, Miss McGhee felt so much responsibility rests on their shoulders, in fact it is often because of the secretary-treasurer that the organization runs so smoothly. These are the groups of people who are charged with the responsibility of keeping accurate minutes, and can provide the opportunity for the meeting to move smoothly so there will be time for the program portion of the meeting.

Members at large are really the backbone of the organization, this is the group that add strength and numbers and allow the W.I. to expand. After attending the Conference, perhaps you will not be hesitant to take office and change your status from member-at-large to an officer.



Mrs. John Brown, Provincial PRO, spends the last hour at conference balancing the sales receipts.