

Rural Development

poverty and underdevelopment. As reported at page 2882 of *Hansard* he stated:

As the ARDA program has evolved, it has become evident that special comprehensive and co-ordinated development programs for these areas are required if living standards for the people in these areas are to be greatly improved in a reasonable length of time.

From looking at the bill it is apparent it is designed to work out programs not solely on an individual farm basis but encompassing a larger area. This is very commendable, but I should like to say at the outset that the appropriation of only \$50 million would appear to be a very small amount in view of the task it is hoped will be accomplished. I hope this is not an indication of the rather limited use which some people may think is contemplated under this legislation. However, Mr. Speaker, being mindful of the vision the Minister of Forestry has for his department, coupled with the need for such a development program, I believe we can look forward with anticipation to the work which will be accomplished under the terms of this legislation.

We are given to understand that a great deal will be involved in the development of this program. Areas are to be selected and this will be a very important part of the entire program.

Reference was made by a former speaker to the fact that the advisory council will apparently be made up of ten officials from departments of the federal government. I do not think that this will be conducive to the best application of the entire program because it appears to me that to a large extent the success of the program and its effective development and over-all application will be dependent upon the views and knowledge of the local inhabitants in these areas and the attention they give to it. I refer to those who know their area, who live there and work there, who are cognizant of the various problems that are faced. So I suggest that the selection of these areas should not be entirely based on the views of the advisory board but should also take into consideration the views of those who are closer to the projects contemplated.

It appears that this bill encompasses physical, social and economic surveys of the areas affected. I believe this was the reason the Minister of Forestry met with officials in my own constituency, to discuss the possibility of an overall survey of the needs of a given area. I believe it is a good thing that the government is prepared not only to give

[Mr. Patterson.]

assistance in the actual execution of plans but is also willing to take part in the burden of making surveys.

We also find that the entire program is dependent upon the co-operation of provincial authorities. I presume it will be possible, as has been the case in the past, for the provincial authorities to recommend particular programs for consideration.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, without going into detail on any of the particular aspects involved but considering the overall picture, the need for such a program and the possibilities envisaged by the minister so far as his department is concerned, I believe the entire program to be a very commendable one. Even though in the past there have been limitations and perhaps frustrations and certain obstacles placed in the way, considering the overall picture I believe that this program will have a tremendous effect and bearing upon the development of these areas and the raising of standards of living, with a consequent contribution toward a better environment for people to carry out their responsibilities and occupations. Therefore, as I have said, so far as we in this party are concerned we are going to give this measure our support.

● (5:50 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Paul Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, the present government has included the war on poverty in its program. I am convinced that this program is most commendable. His Eminence Cardinal Léger has advocated concrete action and we agree with him.

Bill C-151 introduced by the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Sauvé) is certainly in that category, since it aims at furthering the development of the rural areas where greater poverty prevails. In conjunction with the provinces and through this legislation, we seek to reach mainly the areas where salaries are also low because of economic and social rehabilitation programs and which, in the council's opinion, based on information submitted by the province about the physical, economic and social situation of the area, offer reasonable possibilities of economic and social development.

It is meant to push ARDA further still and to make it more effective and more concrete. I understand there are regions where poverty is more prevalent and they are the ones which must be helped first. However, Mr.