

*Rural Development*

help, into consideration. Whether the money goes to the interlake area or northern New Brunswick is not our concern. I do think that if there were discussions between the various ministers across the country, they would support the concept, if it is left up to them, of allocating the money on the basis of need.

● (4:40 p.m.)

There is a clause in the bill which says that the advisory board must meet at least once a year. I hope that was not put in for any real purpose. If there is a year's delay in waiting for the board to meet and give its commitment to any program that has been worked out, this will hold up arrangements much more than the present set-up. During the next 10, 15 or 20 years the advisory board will have to meet frequently because nothing is so frustrating to local groups who produce an idea and get the approval of the province and the minister's office than to have to wait months for the advisory board to meet. Local people must see action. They are not as patient as civil servants trained to wait for decisions.

These are small points but I wanted to make them. I was very glad to hear the minister say that he will not use this legislation for social welfare or for the relief of unemployment. These are not the purposes of ARDA. These are not the purposes of rural development. Leave relief and work on dams and roads to other local, provincial and federal programs. Do not spoil long-range legislation designed to build permanently the income capacity of areas. If these other things are mixed up in it they will kill the long-range program.

The minister is quite right that this is not a transfer payment type of legislation. This is social capital by way of investment that will be returned in higher incomes and a better standard of living for the people of Canada. If that purpose is maintained then this legislation is good.

**Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, it is not often that we have a debate on a subject as important as ARDA and the complementary program outlined in this bill. The minister's introductory remarks were non-partisan, obviously reflecting the thinking of the farm population and those involved in social service fields. The problem is serious enough to warrant non-partisan consideration and the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton) indicated his agreement with this approach.

[Mr. Hamilton.]

It is always a pleasure for me to listen to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, a former Conservative minister of agriculture, when he speaks about the ARDA program, because it is one in which his party is really able to take pride as being a completely new approach on a long-term basis to problems of people in all fields connected with the rural areas of our country. The ARDA approach is one that can be supported by people living in the rural environment and those in the urban communities. If the establishment of a manpower department has any vision such as that associated with ARDA, it will create a brighter picture for people in urban centres.

I wish to make several criticisms of the legislation before us. The minister gave no good reason for introducing this regional type of program rather than incorporating it under the ARDA program which already has regional divisions and makes allowance for the development of the type of program outlined today by the minister. It may be that the reason which the minister will eventually give will be that in the regional program the federal government will carry out projects in those areas of Canada where the need is greatest without necessarily having the support of provincial governments. If that were so then there would be some reason for making these two divisions, because in the case of the first there must be co-operation federally and provincially. But if the minister does not give this as the reason, then I feel we are going to have a duplication of staff and an increase in bureaucracy resulting in people tending to say: After you, Alphonse, it is not in my department.

If the minister wants to see an example of this he has only to look at the Department of Industry and its many branches covering regional development in the electrical field, the aircraft field and other industrial fields, each one a bureaucracy unto itself and with the minister not knowing what they are doing. With such diversification the stage is reached when everybody can pass the buck to somebody else without anybody doing anything about it. This is a criticism which is also made by farm organizations and, after all, an amount of \$50 million is not so large to incorporate within the ARDA program where administrative machinery already exists.

I am not familiar with all the areas which the minister has selected. I have been in the Interlake area of Manitoba and agree with the comments the minister has made about it. The majority of the people there have a gross