

*Rural Development*

but to include the word "agricultural" in the very title of the act itself.

I think there might be danger in future of people being critical of some things that are planned to be undertaken. They might wonder what had happened to the act they knew as ARDA, when really, it would still be around. I think it would be a good thing for the people who will be concerned to know that there is continuing development going on under this most worth-while agricultural enterprise.

**Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West):** I cannot resist saying a few words on this type of legislation. All members of our group support the principle and purpose of this type of legislation. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that I rise to speak this evening as a rancher, as a tree farmer and as a man interested in rural development, and particularly as a man interested in the welfare of our small communities; also, as president of the Canadian Tree Farmers Association. What more can I say?

**An hon. Member:** A wealthy farmer.

**Mr. Herridge:** This legislation has the support of large numbers of organizations in this country. It has the support of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the farmers unions, the Western Reclamation Association, many conservation groups, many community organizations, the Christmas tree farmers and the Canadian Tree Farmers Association.

At this point I might say that we held our annual meeting last Saturday in Ottawa. The minister sent a very nice message to the meeting, and the members present asked me to convey their best wishes to him, also their congratulations, and to wish him well in all he undertakes in the administration of this act.

**An hon. Member:** Carried.

**Mr. Herridge:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman opposite never opens his mouth without subtracting from the sum total of human wisdom.

**An hon. Member:** Shame.

**Mr. Stewart:** Would the hon. member permit a question? May I ask the hon. gentleman, if he agrees that the principles of this legislation are so good, will he not let the bill pass the house so that the people of Canada may have the advantage of it.

[Mr. Johnston.]

● (9:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Herridge:** The principles of application are excellent, but I question the administration. There have been excellent agreements signed with various provinces. Personally I was very pleased that the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke (Mr. Johnston) referred to the agreements signed with the government of B.C. for the renewal of irrigation projects in southeastern B.C., and in particular in the Okanagan district. This is appreciated by the fruit growers, the local farmers and the communities directly concerned, but I believe this type of thing cannot be undertaken on the basis of a crash program. The legislation has got to be developed as the result of experience, research, planning, and the participation of a large number of people.

I should now like to draw to the minister's attention a few of the suggestions we discussed at the meeting we held last Saturday. We are very much in favour of combining agricultural activities and forestry activities of this type under one department, as they were formerly. In European countries, in Sweden, Norway and Great Britain they found a very close relationship between the development of agriculture and the development of wood lot ownership, or forestry of this type, in relation to the rehabilitation of rural communities, and their maintenance and improvement. There is a sort of joint objective in that respect. In passing may I say we were very pleased to see that both these subjects are going to be discussed by the same committee of the House of Commons at this session.

Next, there has to be a great deal of co-operative research undertaken by the federal and provincial governments, by the universities and other organizations. In this connection I say to the minister, do not overlook the contribution that the average, shall I say, intellectual rural observer may make to rural administration. There is many a man who does not have a college degree, who does not belong to the intellectual elite, but who can offer very sound suggestions to those who have had those opportunities. We should encourage in every way possible the smaller communities to participate on an administration basis with respect to the operations of this act.

There must be a great deal of planning over a long period of time. It is not a question of a crash program. We have to