

Rural Development

I did not participate at the resolution stage, but I have read the discussions and I know the minister will be happy about the act. I hope he will be as happy as his colleague, the Minister of Fisheries was, when he kept referring in that particular discussion to the fact that the ARDA program was going to be maintained.

Frankly, from anything that is in the bill that we have before us, I do not see that it is going to be maintained. The minister has dispelled the idea that all this is being done as a way to change the act, so that this might go on one side of the ledger rather than on the other side. I am speaking of the political ledger, which really has two pages. I am not on either one of the pages.

• (8:10 p.m.)

The problem in ARDA, as I see it, has been the lack of emphasis by the government, to date, with respect to the fields of research and statistics. It is not true that these have been included here. If you read the bulletin put out by ARDA in January of 1965, in *Wildlife and Rural Development*, you will find that there was considerable planning and investigation as to the potentials of it. Other publications have indicated examination and surveying that has been done in some areas of Canada. I believe ARDA is now in a position to assess the needs on a long term basis with respect to what can be done and in which fields it should be done.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned a second bill dealing with, as I interpret it, much broader regions, relating directly to large, low income areas in a special category. I can think of one in my own area, the Abitibi-Timiskaming region, and the area south of Restigouche in New Brunswick. There are a number of these areas which should be specifically named for additional help, apart from that provided through municipal, provincial and federal agreements implemented to date. If this is true I expect most hon. members will support the second bill; but since we are amending the ARDA act I think we should incorporate a separate section in it to include these areas in which I hope the federal government will give leadership, rather than counting on agreements to be made with the provinces.

Some hon. members are worried that under the second bill we will be setting up new boards and entering into new agreements, so that we will have more personnel and staff than projects. The labour costs of advisory boards will be extremely high, but I think

[Mr. Peters.]

the purposes of the second bill could be incorporated in this one. I have read the second bill and seen nothing in it contrary to ARDA, except that it places emphasis on larger regions rather than on separate projects.

We now have an attractive motif for ARDA; but ARDA is somewhat like political parties which in the course of time are known by their initials rather than their names, with people tending to forget their real names. This is true of ARDA. Many people understand the implications of ARDA in their own communities, but do not care what its initials stand for. For this reason I hope its full name will be retained.

[Translation.]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I must first congratulate the minister who is here tonight. We regretted his absence when the resolution was introduced. His speech tonight, and especially his enthusiastic delivery, seemed made to entice us to accept his arguments more readily.

There was some good in what he said tonight, but there were also things which we cannot support without reservation. On the whole, however, I believe it marks another step ahead for ARDA.

The hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) said earlier that the minister seemed to be repeating the speech he made in 1964. I think the hon. member for Timiskaming has forgotten that the subject was agriculture and that land is ploughed anew every year, each time yielding a new harvest.

Listening to the minister, I thought he merely wanted to inject some local colour in his beloved ARDA program for which he works so hard. That is why tonight, although he already knows my views on certain aspects of ARDA, I wish to congratulate him on his good work and especially on his sincerity. He cannot supervise every aspect of ARDA—perhaps he would do even better then—but as his own duties take up all his time, he can certainly not be blamed for all the sins of administration.

I reacted somewhat like the other members with regard to the bill introduced tonight to have the name of the act changed. Before listening to the minister's explanation, I wondered why the change in name was being requested, since the first act implemented in 1961 was known as ARDA or the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act, and it is now wished to call it the Rural Development