

Rural Development

I also recall numerous comments were made by members of the then opposition to the effect that the scope of the measure was so large and so broad that it would encompass almost anything the government proposed to do. In fact there was some reference to the possibility of building a subway in Montreal and in Toronto under the terms of the legislation. But now we find the present minister introducing amendments which he says will greatly expand and broaden the scope of the legislation. That is a contradiction, because at the time it was introduced they said it gave the government too many powers.

Following passage of the legislation, during the period that the administration of ARDA was being set up, there was relatively little that could be done except to carry out certain surveys and undertake the administrative work necessary to make the legislation operative. Then, following the election of 1963, there was a change of government and the former member for Calgary South, who became minister of agriculture, was responsible for the administration of the act.

● (7:10 p.m.)

We all recall the difficulties that the government were in at that time in respect of who was going to be responsible for the administration of this act. Finally it fell upon the Minister of Forestry to assume responsibility. I say quite frankly he has applied himself with diligence and sincerity in making this legislation the type of legislation that was envisaged by the former ministry. Again I am sure hon. members opposite will forgive me if I go back and remind them of the criticism they levelled at the minister at that time, stating that he was visionary. But he had seen much further ahead than they could, at that time. Today they are reaping the benefits of that vision, because this legislation is doing precisely what the minister at that time intended it should do. Mind you, it does require a great deal of co-operation on the part of the provincial governments, it requires a great deal of initiative on the part of the people in the communities in which the act is to apply, and it requires some direction on the part of the minister. I am quite pleased that the minister is providing leadership in that direction.

It is ironical, of course, to have to point out that the legislation they criticized as being too visionary in 1961 now is the type of legislation which they see will do a great deal to help them implement their so-called war

[Mr. Jorgenson.]

on poverty. The bill intends to do several things. First of all, it intends to appoint an advisory committee and provide for the payment of the members of that committee, whereas in the original legislation the bill provided only for their travelling expenses. I have no objection to this, if it is used in the context in which it is intended to be used; but we have had experiences on the part of this government where positions constantly were being created for former or defeated Liberal candidates and friends of the Liberal party.

I hope the purpose of this legislation is to provide for the expenses of an advisory committee that truly is an advisory committee, and not just a committee for defeated remnants of the Liberal Party. The government will do well to ensure that the persons appointed to this advisory committee do have some experience.

Mr. Stewart: Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a point of order just to make sure we know what is before us. We are on Bill C-152, and I think it is in the other bill, C-151, that the advisory committee is provided for.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I believe, because of the fact that the minister is not here we should not draw the inference that he wishes to put a limitation on discussion of this bill, although really the purpose of the bill is only to change the name of ARDA. It surely is in order to discuss all the problems of ARDA, because the minister himself has not seen fit to be here to limit it.

Mr. Jorgenson: If the hon. member will look at the proposed new section 6 in Bill C-152 he will notice there is provision for an advisory committee, and to pay "such amount for each day he attends any meeting of the committee and is entitled to be paid reasonable travelling and living expenses while absent from his ordinary place of residence in the course of his duties". That is part and parcel of the bill. I presume the hon. member had not read the bill thoroughly and was not aware of this. This certainly is part of the bill.

Mr. Turner: I think the parliamentary secretary is very familiar with the terms of the bill.

Mr. Stewart: I was not criticizing the hon. member. I merely wanted to make it clear to the house that we were dealing with Bill C-152, and that he was referring to this