

Rural Development

to encourage them to do so. These soil conserving crops may need to be plowed under in order to conserve moisture.

Is the minister going to get into conservation programs which will offer payments to the farmers to do that sort of thing? It has been done elsewhere. It has been done in the United States. Are you going to go about these things on an individual farm basis or are you going to put conservation into effect in an area generally? Is the minister simply thinking of conservation on the basis of spreading some commercial fertilizer that may be required by a particular farm?

I understand that the minister is a lawyer from Montreal and perhaps does not know too much about farming—I am sorry, the Magdalen Islands, I stand corrected. I say to him that he should go across Canada. He should come out to Alberta, where my riding is, and I will show him the things about which I am talking. I will show him some of the work we want done by ARDA. This idea of concentrating on one part of Canada or one corner of Canada, is not good because ARDA was developed to have a broad application to the whole country. We would like to see the minister come out and become familiar with our problems. I will rest the argument at that point, sir, provided the minister will explain what he means by marginal.

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): I should like to intervene briefly in this debate to speak about the change in name of the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act. If the minister thought it over, Mr. Speaker, perhaps he would be happier if the agricultural part of the name were left; and if his amendment were to the effect that the legislation should be called the agriculture and rural development act. Certainly in British Columbia the name of the act is not yet a household term. There has been a feeling in that province that projects have been approved very slowly and rather rarely. I believe this situation is changing. It certainly has changed in the constituency I represent. We have 37 major projects under way now, having to do particularly with irrigation.

● (9:10 p.m.)

The *Vernon News* of February 28 announced an extensive rebuilding of the Vernon irrigation system at a cost of \$6 million. This project is a most worth-while one. Then again on March 24 two smaller

projects were approved, again in the north Okanagan. There was the Woods lake improvement district irrigation system and the Grandview irrigation system. The local newspaper, in reporting this development, does not use the abbreviation but refers to the act in its full, although cumbersome name, Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act. This may be just a wish on the part of this very fine newspaper to be extremely exact and proper. Also, I think it is an indication that ARDA had not been until recently sufficiently involved in the Okanagan area, or at least, it may be an indication that it had not been involved there as much as it may have been in other parts of Canada.

I think, were the word "agricultural" to remain in the name of the act, it would be a good idea, because it would provide emphasis on the practical as well as the theoretical aspect.

I should think in agricultural development, as in irrigation projects that I have outlined, you always have the assurance that this is of immediate benefit to the district, and the name would make it immediately obvious.

The announcements of agricultural development can be hailed by anyone interested in the welfare of the districts involved, and what is then obvious is that the whole concept of rural development benefits by having a very close relationship to agricultural tradition and agricultural enterprise in Canada.

The efforts that will be projected and undertaken that are solely rural development and that have no direct connection with agriculture will, I think, not necessarily always but very frequently, be of a more controversial nature.

We have had various projects outlined, some of which have been criticized this evening as being altogether too nebulous for an organization, or for an act such as this to be considering. What has been outlined in this house today justifies that these measures should be taken. In fact, I think the act should be administered so as to involve enterprises that are daring, that are original, and that are unusual for agricultural development across the country. I think it is absolutely essential that the whole thing remain as imaginative as possible, to that end.

At the same time I believe that ARDA should retain its strong and practical agricultural base that is now being so well administered in the north Okanagan region. I think that the minister would be well advised not just to tack ARDA on the end of the name,