

*Supply—Forestry and Rural Development*

parts of the country, it does not seem to be translating into actual projects or works which will have the effect of improving the productivity of our agricultural industry.

I must confess, however, that in the past when I spoke so critically of ARDA I was wrong, because I find that in one's analysis of that program he must bear in mind a very simple fact, and that is that in some parts of the country, in certain provinces, it is working out quite well. The studies, surveys and investigations which had been carried out in past years now, in some provinces, are being translated into actual works and projects of one kind or another. In other provinces this is not the case. These seem to be the plain facts of the matter. From my reading and research I find that in provinces like British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec significant and important works directly related to agricultural production and income are under way; some have already been completed. Because I do not think one should try to be too diplomatic, I shall mention the provinces in which such works are not under way. In Alberta and Manitoba—for whatever reason, and perhaps the minister can help shed some light on this—the federal expenditures or contributions to the ARDA program still seem to be bogged down. They seem to be occupied with an endless round of surveys and studies and the works are not being put into effect.

One can sense this by taking a quick look at the ARDA catalogue for the most recent year for which this is available. For each of the provinces in which ARDA is in effect there is a summary of the amount being spent by way of federal contribution, the amount that is left to the provinces to take up, the nature of the projects that are being undertaken, the number of projects, and so on. One finds that in certain of the provinces there is a very poor performance, to date. There may be some very good and legitimate reason for this being so. Surely after the passage of six years now, since the enactment of this legislation, it is not unreasonable to suggest that there should be a greater degree of activity in so far as actual works in the field are concerned. By actual works in the field I do not mean a continuation of the surveys, feasibility studies and other studies of one kind or another.

I realize that those who are charged with the responsibility to administer this program and to try to translate it into effective action are often faced with the problem of not having sufficient data and information.

[Mr. Schreyer.]

Therefore it becomes necessary for them to carry out fairly extensive studies and surveys. However, in many instances, with which I am personally familiar, there were direct possibilities for action, such as in respect of the marshalling of land for the establishment of community pastures and the undertaking of a drainage and land reclamation project in order to give marginal farm operators an opportunity to have community pasture land available near at hand so that they could get more beef cattle into production. This is particularly true in light of the fact that the farmers have been advised and encouraged by the agricultural extension people to take every opportunity to get into the business of the production of beef.

When these people become involved in local ARDA committees, as they are exhorted to do, they hold local meetings at which they suggest to the appropriate ARDA officials concrete proposals having to do with drainage work, community pasture establishment or community pasture extension. In all too many cases these proposals are fobbed off. The farmers are told either that there is insufficient data on which to determine the feasibility of proceeding in this direction, or that it sounds quite good but that there is of course the matter of non-availability of funds. Time passes and in the meantime the income position of these people does not improve; it actually deteriorates further. Where once they had hoped that ARDA would be at least one source of assistance, in the matter of self help and so on, they find there must still be a considerable passage of time before anything tangible or concrete takes place.

I feel it must be said that the impression is growing—in many cases perhaps not justified but in others justified—that ARDA is getting itself bogged down in a proliferation of studies and projects not related to actual works in the field. I do not know how I can emphasize this any more, but it must be re-emphasized. It has been said that the ARDA legislation was brilliantly conceived and in some provinces is relatively well implemented. In other provinces, however, it does not seem to have been implemented at all. Since the minister has the responsibility for this program he must inform himself as to the reason this discrepancy exists in the implementation of this program as between one province and another. There is a growing feeling that we have a bureaucracy which is proliferating, and which is an example of Parkinson's law at work. I would be very