

*Rural Development*

confirmed, to a large extent, this belief that we had at that time.

I was quite pleased to note the attitude of the minister. When he began to speak on this subject, I think he was a little embarrassed by the fact he was not here when he should have been. We can forgive him for that because I do not believe any of us expected the other bill to go through quite so quickly. I noted that as he warmed to his subject he made his remarks with more and more enthusiasm, indeed the same kind of enthusiasm the former minister had when he introduced the legislation and when he attempted to convince members how useful it could be in assisting rural development.

We are pleased to note that the minister has been imbued with this kind of enthusiasm and energy. I do not wish to offer any carping criticism of his activities in this particular field. There are, however, a few comments I should like to make in addition to those I have already made. When we introduced the legislation in 1961 there was a great deal of criticism because this was long-term legislation. The present Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) was one of those who offered that criticism at great length, as if the legislation could have been introduced any earlier. If the legislation is long range in nature, it has to start somewhere. I am glad to note the government has finally accepted the fact that this long term legislation was designed to do the very job the former minister of agriculture intended it should do.

I am pleased to note also that the minister has not fallen into that old habit of criticizing the former minister of agriculture for his activities. Indeed, I want to thank him for the kind words he used when referring to the former minister who introduced this legislation, and the enthusiasm with which he followed that up. This is a bad habit into which the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) has fallen and into which the former minister of agriculture, the former member for Calgary South, also fell. They seemed to feel their positions could be enhanced by criticizing former ministers.

In so far as the proposed amendment of the act to change the name is concerned, I would have thought that if the minister were sincere, and I have every reason to believe he is, he could have accepted the suggestion that was made by the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Chatterton) when the resolution was before this house. He suggested

[Mr. Jorgenson.]

that the legislation be entitled the agriculture and rural development act, which would have in no way changed the initials of the act, which have become a household word across Canada.

If the intentions of the government in this regard were purely political, if they honestly thought they required an amendment to the act for political reasons or because it was such a greatly expanded act, they could have called it the greatly expanded rural development act, and this would have resulted in a typically Liberal set of initials. There would have been no question, then, that it was their legislation.

I am glad to see the minister has made provision for the development of this legislation in conjunction with the department of manpower. If results are to be achieved through this legislation, then it will be necessary to do this very thing and I want to congratulate him upon making this provision. I hope that in providing leadership for this legislation he is not going to take away the initiative of the local communities, which will be so necessary if the legislation is to be successful. I am sure those of us who have read about the experience of the United States in this particular field will remember that in the study by the Senate and the House committee it was pointed out that the government could well provide the direction, but if too much paternalism were offered, then in almost every case the rural development programs in the United States were doomed to failure.

You must insist that there is some direction, some leadership, but in the final analysis the initiative has to be taken by the local people. I hope the minister has not overlooked this very important aspect of rural development. I note that in outlining the new agreements that have been entered into with the provinces, he is providing the changes in line with the experience we have had with ARDA in the past few years. These changes are necessary.

● (8:00 p.m.)

I notice there has been an ever increasing number of press releases emanating from the minister's office dealing with agreements being entered into with the provinces. It is interesting to note the wide variety of those agreements. In entering into these agreements I am sure the minister has discovered that the original type of agreement first entered into was somewhat different from what is necessary today. Largely I think this is the