

Rural Development

this multiple land use in areas of this kind will work out under the proposed amendments to the Agricultural, Rehabilitation and Development Act and in the light of the proposed new commercial fisheries development act, it might be very useful not only in our consideration of this bill but also in our later discussion of Bill No. C-145.

● (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Eric Stefanson (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments on this particular bill. I was pleased to hear the minister's statement tonight, although it was pretty well based on the new five-year agreement. To start with I want to say that I am opposed to the change in name of this particular act as proposed in clause 2 of the bill, which would change the name of the act to the Rural Development Act. I think the original name was very fitting.

The original act was divided into three parts. It specifies the various types of projects and in section 2 deals with alternate uses of land. Section 3 provides for rural development projects, while section 4 provides for soil and water conservation projects. I believe that under those three headings almost any type of agricultural or rural development can be undertaken. Therefore I think the renaming of the act is quite unnecessary and very unfair, because ARDA has become a byword in Canada.

In the minister's brochure entitled "Federal-provincial rural development agreement, 1965-70", the introduction refers to ARDA a dozen times, which indicates how important is the expression ARDA and the emphasis that is placed on that particular expression. Therefore I hope that, whatever the minister does, he will keep that term.

In the brochure published by the Department of Agriculture in the fall of 1963 entitled "ARDA—a program geared to problems, possibilities and progress in the development of natural resources and income and employment opportunities", the general objectives of the program are set out on page 4, as follows:

All of ARDA's primary objectives fall within the general area of conservation, comprehensive resource development, and community development. Possible projects under ARDA fall into four broad categories:

1. Projects for alternative uses of land,
2. Projects for soil and water conservation,
3. Rural development projects—assistance to rural communities to develop and diversify their resources and to create income and employment opportunities,
4. A wide range of research projects—particularly social and economic research, to uncover avenues to improving conditions in rural areas.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that under those four headings you can undertake almost any type of project, certainly in rural Manitoba.

I have great faith in the original act and in what it will do for a great many rural areas in Canada. The minister referred to the Interlake area of Manitoba, which is in my riding and is a designated area. It was declared a test area on March 15, 1963 and later that year was declared a designated area. There has been considerable development in that area. The minister has been out there so I know he is familiar with the Interlake area of Manitoba.

I just want to show some of the projects which have been approved in Manitoba under that particular program, Mr. Speaker, and there are a wide variety of them. For instance, there was a project to appraise the commercial fishery, to determine the economic benefits which could be derived by the rural people of the Interlake area. Another project was a study of ethnic group values in the Interlake region to determine the basic values of ethnic groups with respect to receptiveness, adjustment and change. Then a general economic survey was made of the Interlake region to take inventory of and to analyse regional resources. Another project was a study of the feasibility of establishing industries that are suited to the Interlake region. A very large variety of projects have been approved, and I feel that the old act is wide enough to undertake any type of project in rural Manitoba.

I should just like to refer to the new agreement. The minister referred to section 4, which reads as follows:

The national contribution of Canada shall be:

(a) an amount of \$125 million to be allotted to the provinces, the expenditure of Canada not to exceed \$25 million in any one fiscal year;—

The minister pointed out that this was a great increase over the original agreement, and rightly so.

(b) a Special Fund for Rural Economic Development of \$50 million, as described in Section 37 of this Agreement.

I take it that this \$50 million is the \$50 million referred to in Bill No. C-151. I had hoped that that provision would be incorporated in the bill presently before us, because I think it would certainly fit in with this bill. The \$50 million is designed to help designated areas, and I would take it that an area like the Interlake area of Manitoba would fit into that particular category, if they qualified for assistance under that act.