

Rural Development

the provincial and local levels. But in this bill, we do not talk about the same type of committees.

Besides I will be able to give specific answers to hon. members who are interested in asking questions in that connection.

Therefore, in addition to what I have just said, we have in essence, almost continuous consultation with the provinces, meetings and exchanges and, at the end of April, I will be visiting the ministers of the four western provinces with ARDA officials. We will go and meet them in their own provinces, in their capitals, to discuss with their officials the application of the new agreement which came into force on April 1, 1965.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be too long. I hope I have been able, in those few minutes, to indicate to hon. members that we are amending this act only because we have to and, second, that we have no intention whatsoever of taking credit for this legislation away from anybody.

Later on I will move an amendment to this bill to link it definitively to the initials ARDA. When the time comes, I hope hon. members will be so kind as to allow me to move that amendment.

I hope at the end of the day, we will be able, as we were in 1961, to pass unanimously the amendments set forth in Bill C-152.

I thank the house for its undivided attention.

[*English*]

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, would the minister explain now how he intends to move this motion?

Mr. Sauvé: As soon as we reach clause 2 I will move that the act be cited as the Rural Development (ARDA) Act, so that it will incorporate once and for all "ARDA", as was not the case before. But I will do that when we are in committee.

Mr. Peters: May I ask the minister one question. If this bill is not now passed, is it the expectation of the minister that all that he has outlined cannot be accomplished?

Mr. Sauvé: That is so. The Department of Justice has given us written notice that unless this bill is passed we cannot go on entertaining projects in certain rural areas which have no agriculture. I mentioned earlier that this applied to outport regions in Newfoundland and certain parts of northern Saskatchewan and Alberta where there are

no possibilities for agriculture. It would be impossible for us to accept any projects unless the bill is passed, which means that we would be restricting the aims of the act. I am sure that originally, if this ruling had been made by the Department of Justice, the act would have been amended.

• (7:50 p.m.)

If you will recall, there was a resources for tomorrow conference some time ago and at that conference there was a proposal to amend the act by deleting the word "agriculture". In 1961, people attending the resources for tomorrow conference were aware of the fact that the act was limited to projects in rural areas and it was impossible to undertake a number of other projects.

Mr. Peters: Is the minister prepared to table the legal document that warrants this confusion?

Mr. Sauvé: I do not believe—

Mr. Jorgenson: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I feel these questions could well be asked at the committee stage of this bill.

Mr. Peters: Speaking to the point of order, I may say it has been the practice to ask questions, if the member speaking will accept those questions before resuming his seat.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Is the hon. member for Medicine Hat rising on a point of order or a question?

Mr. Olson: No, I thought you had recognized me to speak on this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): If the hon. member wishes to speak on this motion, he will have an opportunity to do so later. I understand, as the result of an exchange of views at the commencement of the debate, that the Chair would recognize the hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. W. H. Jorgenson (Provencher): I am sure the members of the house were pleased to hear the statement made by the minister. This is the first time, since the government took office, that a comprehensive statement has been made on ARDA and the activities of this particular branch of the department. We recognized when the legislation was introduced, while we were the government, that it was a very important piece of legislation which was going to provide the means of assisting a good many areas in this country. The statement just made by the minister has