

*Rural Development*

deemed necessary and prudent to implement crop insurance on a test area basis so the administration could learn from experience and through that learning could decide when it was right to make crop insurance available on a province-wide basis. I maintain that after five years it is time we thought seriously about making this legislation applicable to all parts of the country, and all regions of the country that meet certain requirements having to do with level of income, land use, and so on.

I do not know whether the minister has mentioned this, but I would say with all the emphasis I can muster that to my way of thinking it is really unfair that we should continue year by year applying ARDA to only a few parts of the country. For example, in Manitoba ARDA at the present time is for the most part restricted in its application to the interlake area. It is true that agreements have been entered into with the province of Manitoba for the construction and development of a provincial park on the outskirts of metropolitan Winnipeg, and so on; but in so far as rural residents are concerned, the program has been restricted to the Interlake area. Yet there are other fairly large regions within that province that have much the same kind of economic circumstances as the interlake area. In the eastern part of Manitoba, running from lake Winnipeg in a crescent on the western escarpment of the Canadian shield, one finds much the same kind of farming operations and economic circumstances as in the interlake area. Surely an area like this should be considered for inclusion in the ARDA program before many more years pass. If this is not done one would have to admit that these people are simply being denied the opportunity to benefit from whatever programming ARDA has to carry out in the next few years.

I should also like to put to the minister the thought that already there is growing skepticism, not just on my part but on the part of many people to whom I talk about ARDA, to the effect that after this number of years—and it is almost five years now—it seems that ARDA is still very much in its first phase, that is to say in its analysis, survey and study phase, and nothing really concrete or tangible of any magnitude is being done by ARDA in the way of actual, concrete programming.

I know that before effective programming and implementation of programming can be carried out there must be a pretty thoroughgoing study and deep understanding of the

[Mr. Schreyer.]

economic and social problems involved. But I am only passing on to the minister what I said is becoming a more deep-rooted attitude on the part of people in so far as ARDA is concerned. As the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton) said earlier today, if the feeling becomes more widespread on the part of people that there is procrastination and bureaucratic delay in this or any other program, that program will be killed in the minds of the public and particularly those who will be involved with it. With that sentiment I thoroughly agree.

● (8:00 p.m.)

I would take this opportunity of congratulating the minister on bringing forward this legislation, which I hope will be the beginning of a real intention to start, without delay, actual, concrete programs of development and income raising in different parts of rural Canada. I think at this point, too, it would be relevant to ask the minister whether all due consideration has been given to the desirability and possibility of including in the program the people living in areas such as those I have mentioned. I am sure the minister is aware that in the war against poverty program in the United States the practice, which I believe is authorized in the legislation, is that at each level there shall be representatives of the dwellers in the designated areas themselves. So that I hope, as the minister follows through with this legislation, if this practice does not obtain, one will be developed to include the various advisory and planning boards to deal with representations of the people living in these designated rural areas. The expertise must be there, but at the same time it seems to me that there is much to be gained by having included the opinions and the advice of people who are actually and directly involved.

I must say that in reading the several speeches given by the minister on ARDA and its implementation, I have not come across any reference to this specific point as to whether such representation was being allowed, encouraged or solicited by the administrators of this legislation.

Let me say too, Mr. Speaker, that I believe the task which faces the ARDA program is immense in the extreme, and that is perhaps the main reason why I am somewhat pessimistic as to whether it will succeed to the extent of the image built up by publicity of this program, and to the extent of the hope built up in the hearts of many farm families and farm people. There is nothing wrong