

Deep Sea Fisheries Act

Paragraph (k) provides:

(k) "money paid to Canada for a special purpose" includes all money that is paid to a public officer under or pursuant to a statute, trust, treaty, undertaking, or contract, and is to be disbursed for a purpose specified in or pursuant to such statute, trust, treaty, undertaking or contract.

Section 20 of the Financial Administration Act provides:

20 (1) Money received by or on behalf of Her Majesty for a special purpose and paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for that purpose, subject to the provisions of any statute applicable thereto.

(2) Subject to any other act, interest may be allowed and paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund in respect of money to which subsection (1) applies, in accordance with and at rates fixed by the minister with the approval of the Governor in Council.

Clearly, the Halifax Award was money paid to Canada pursuant to a treaty; money which was to be disbursed for a special purpose pursuant to such a treaty.

Mr. Davis: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Crouse: Mr. Speaker, when I have finished my comments I will welcome a question from the minister. Perhaps the minister would wait until I have finished my speech.

Clearly, also, Parliament, by the Deep Sea Fisheries Act, instructed the government to pay out an annual grant not exceeding \$160,000 to aid in the development of the Canadian deep sea fisheries, to encourage the building and fitting-out of improved fishing vessels and generally to bring about some improvement in the working conditions of our fishermen.

It is now apparent to our fishermen and to every other Canadian that what the government intends to do by the repeal of this statutory instruction to Parliament is to gain complete control over the Halifax award which would be free of parliamentary control. Under subsection 1 of section 20 of the Financial Administration Act the government will be free to determine the purpose of the Halifax award without anyone to question its expenditures—not Parliament, not the Auditor General, and certainly not the fishermen.

By the terms of this bill the government intends to violate a sacred trust. It plans to confiscate, for no real reason, funds which have been specifically earmarked for the special use of our fishermen since 1877. If this type of action with special trust funds was engaged in by officials of a private trust com-

pany, we would put them in prison. I do not really know what we can do to the federal government. Yet this government, with its almost total disregard for the rights of our fishermen, hopes to silently steal funds in the almost certain knowledge that the individual fisherman will accept his loss in the same manner that he accepts his loss from storms and disaster, silently and grimly.

At least our fishermen have a right to know what this government is taking from them on the flimsy excuse that the payment of fishing bounties is no longer appropriate to present day circumstances and that the amount of the grant provided for in the act could be utilized in a more productive way. What nonsense! What tommy-rot! Whoever heard of the payment of money being no longer appropriate to present day circumstances?

How does the government plan to use this money to help our fishermen in a productive way? The bill is certainly very vague on this point. I ask the minister, why does he not spell out his program? Why does he not, instead of using pious platitudes, tell this House and the fishermen of Canada what he intends to do with this money? It should be made abundantly clear that this government has, by a reverse process, already taxed the Maritime and Quebec deep sea fishermen in the amount of \$160,000 by dropping this sum from the main appropriation act for the fiscal year which ends 31 March, 1970. By this bill the government, having taken the \$160,000 which rightly belongs to the fishermen of the Maritimes provinces and Quebec, wants to tax them the full amount of the Halifax award, namely, the \$4½ million in this trust fund, by way of a capital levy.

In my opinion, since the government has now decided to do away with the fishing bounty of \$160,000, it should indicate what special programs it plans to initiate for the development of the sea fisheries of Canada, using the \$4½ million on which the bounty was based. As a matter of fact, I contend that this fund should be much greater than \$4½ million since the government has only been paying out \$160,000 a year, which is the interest at less than 4 per cent on the \$4½ million which the government received from the United States government.

The government is now paying 8 per cent and more on Canadian savings bonds, and rather than taking money away from our fisheries trust fund it should have credited the fund with the difference between the 4 per cent paid to the fishermen and the annual