

*Fisheries Development Act*

fisheries. There are several factors which point to that conclusion. First, as a government and as a country, we are pushing very hard to expand our limits much farther seaward in order to gain greater control over the harvesting, protection and development of our marine resources off our coasts. It is also evident that Canada is achieving greater recognition as a coastal state. I believe that is evidenced by the increased catch quotas granted to this country by the International Commission for the North-west Atlantic Fisheries. It is the conclusion of the Minister of Fisheries and his department that fish are there to be taken by Canadians, but in some ways, probably many ways, our fishermen do not have the right kind of vessels or the right kind of equipment to enable them to go out and harvest the fishery resources. The purpose of this amendment is to change this to some extent by making funds available to owners of existing vessels so that they can make the necessary modifications or conversions to enable them to operate more efficiently and profitably.

I will not go further into the development of an explanation, except to say that in the administration of the subsidy and its application to modifications or conversions, the same criteria which are presently being used by the Fisheries and Marine Service in approving subsidies for new vessel construction will be applied to modifications and conversions. The Fisheries and Marine Service will be selected in approving any boat for conversion. It will want to assure itself that any conversion will result in a marked improvement in the harvesting capability of the vessel. The department will look thoroughly into the sustainable yield of resources by species and area where the vessel will be operating. Market demands will be assessed and technical and economic efficiency will be examined before any approvals are given or decisions are made.

That is the gist of the proposed amendment. I am satisfied it will get the support of hon. members of the House.

**Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on Bill C-2, to amend the Fisheries Development Act. I first wish to say that I regret the inability of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) to be with us today, but I realize that at times his duties require him to be outside the House. As a Nova Scotian, I welcome the comments of a fellow Nova Scotian, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen).

This is a very short bill. As stated in the explanatory note, when the bill is passed the minister will have the authority to make payment, not only for the construction of an equipment for fishing vessels, but also their modification and conversion.

This bill provides us with an opportunity to review the Fisheries Development Act which was first introduced by the then Minister of Fisheries, the Hon. H. J. Robichaud, on March 6, 1966. At this time I must express my regret, and I believe the sincere regret of many fishermen on the Atlantic coast, the west coast and in central Canada, that we do not have today a minister entitled the Minister of Fisheries whose sole responsibility would be to develop and implement policy for this important primary industry. However, the decision to place the responsibility for our environment as well as fisheries on the shoulders of one minister was a decision that was taken by the present government. It is one for which they will have to give an

[Mr. MacEachen.]

accounting to the fishermen, at least in Atlantic Canada, at some future date.

The origin of the act may be traced back to a 1964 federal-provincial fisheries conference which was attended by representatives of all the fisheries administrations, as well as the federal fisheries service. At that time the representatives agreed there should be a national fisheries development program emphasizing development of, rather than research into, fisheries matters. Passage of the Fisheries Development Act empowered the fisheries service to take initiatives in all aspects of fisheries development. It is worth noting that prior to the introduction of this act, programs of assistance to the fishing industry were implemented through specific appropriations and not under a specific piece of fisheries legislation.

The Fisheries Development Act as originally passed permits the Minister of the Environment to undertake projects of basically three different types. This act is all encompassing as far as the fishing industry is concerned. It might well be called the fishing industry's bible. First, it is concerned with projects designed to implement more efficient exploitation of fishery resources and exploration for and development of new fishery resources and new fisheries, second, projects for the introduction and demonstration to fishermen of new types of fishing vessels, equipment and techniques; third, projects for the development of new fishery products, as well as projects for the improvement of the handling, processing and distribution of fishery products.

The act also permits the minister to enter into agreements with the provinces for the joint undertaking of authorized projects and, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to provide for the payment to the province of contributions in respect of the cost of authorized projects.

In the formulation and assessment of fisheries development projects, the federal government may undertake economic studies either alone, or jointly with provincial agencies, universities, educational institutions or private individuals. The minister is also permitted to enter into agreements with any person for the joint undertaking of any authorized project, and to make payments to any such person or make a contribution in respect of the cost of any such project undertaken by that person. The minister is required to make use of the services and facilities of other federal departments or agencies wherever possible in carrying out any authorized project or economic study under the Act.

● (1210)

The minister, subject to terms and conditions prescribed by the Governor in Council, may make payments for the construction and equipment of commercial cold storage facilities or commercial bait freezing facilities equipped with mechanical refrigeration which are suitable for the preservation of fishery products, the modification of such facilities in order to make such facilities suitable for the preservation of fishery products, and the construction and equipment of fishing vessels. The Act also outlines certain provisions which are to be included in agreements with respect to projects undertaken with a province and payments to a province.