

*Government Organization*

As far as other councils or bodies are concerned, the province and the federal government may set up such bodies under an agreement, as was the case with the Prince Edward Island agency. We can already do that. We do not need any addition to the law to permit us to set up that type of agency. As I say, we did that with the Prince Edward Island plan. We have comparable structures in the lower St. Lawrence agreement where we have, *de facto*, recognized the local council as the regional economic council. I think we have sufficient powers and we do not need anything else in the law.

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Chairman, I do not think the minister is getting my point. It is not difficult to contemplate that under the kinds of structures which have been devised to date affecting the government of Canada and one province specifically, other provinces may wish to participate in some form of incorporated body set up under clause 26(3)(c). At present it seems that participation with respect to such incorporated body is limited to one province, but I submit it would be more desirable if two or three provinces participated with the federal government.

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** No.

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** As the minister knows, I am prepared to move an amendment adding the words in the fourth line from the end of the subclause "or provinces". I think that such an amendment would give greater flexibility.

**Mr. Marchand (Langelier):** I have seen the amendment, Mr. Chairman. The law officers of the Crown inform us that when we use the word "province" in the singular, that also includes provinces in the plural.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Shall clause 26 as amended carry?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Clause 26 as amended carried.

Clause 27 and 28 carried.

On clause 29—*Council established.*

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Chairman, this clause attempts to deal with the scant remaining bones of the Atlantic Development Board. One wonders why the government

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]

introduced this clause, because the Atlantic Development Board seems to have been stripped of a great deal of authority. Under this clause, a group of men is to meet once or twice a year, in Ottawa presumably; they may offer advice to the minister which he may accept if it is worth his while to, and that about sums up their activities. Introducing this clause will, in retrospect I think, turn out to be a mistake. Since the early 1960's we have attempted, in trying to deal with regions suffering from economic disparity, to develop some kind of instrument to bring about effective co-operation between the provinces, the federal authority, local bodies and municipal bodies. Hon. members in all parties of this house applauded the idea of the Atlantic Development Board dealing with these problems. It is therefore ironic that the party that was in power in 1963—that is the party in power today—and which decided the Atlantic Development Board needed more power, more independence, and more opportunity to take the kinds of action it has been taking since 1962, has decided in 1969 it was wrong. Today we have a complete about face. Actually, the government is saying, "We do not need the Board anymore. We will not kill the child completely but keep its ghost alive." That is tragic and the minister will discover, when he is dealing with some of the problems in which the Board was involved, that a major mistake has been made in downgrading the Atlantic Development Board.

In that connection, may I suggest an amendment to clause 29. I feel there must be some consistency in this bill. All regions ought to have an equal opportunity to become involved in regional economic expansion and to participate in expansion programs. If the concept of the kind of council represented by an Atlantic development council is valid, I suggest there is equal validity for establishing similar councils to deal with the problems, say, of parts of Quebec, northern Ontario or parts of the west. Considering where the minister's home is, I am surprised that he has denied other regions the opportunity of being served by the kind of council we envisage here. I therefore suggest, Mr. Chairman, the addition of subclause 2 to clause 29, which would read as follows:

The Minister shall, in consultation with the province or provinces concerned and such other persons or organizations as the Minister or the province or provinces consider appropriate, establish similar development councils for other regions.