

Commercial Fisheries Development

Section 3, subsection 4, reads as follows:

For the purpose of assisting the formulation and assessment of fisheries development projects, the minister may undertake economic studies alone or jointly with the government of any province or agency thereof or with any university—

Under these circumstances, can the hon. minister undertake development projects with a university without the agreement of the province, or the agreement of the province of Quebec? I wonder. That is questionable.

And I read on:

—with any university, educational institution or person—

The minister:

—may co-ordinate such studies with similar studies undertaken in Canada.

The hon. minister has to face certain problems in the provincial sphere, whether it is in Quebec or in British Columbia. He may not have similar problems in the Maritimes, where he comes from, for in those provinces, the role the federal government plays in fisheries administration has yet to be determined.

Mr. Chairman, I feel the matter is quite clear in British Columbia just as it is in the province of Quebec.

Here is what we find in section 4 of Bill C-145:

The minister shall, in carrying out any project or economic study under this act, make use, wherever possible, of the services and facilities of other departments of the government of Canada or of any agencies thereof.

Now, we find that the minister "shall make use of the services and facilities of other departments of the government of Canada" to decide upon the policy to be followed, not only in one province but in Canada as a whole, as regards Canadian fisheries.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we have a Minister of Game and Fish in the province of Quebec. Other provinces also have one. I noticed a while ago that one hon. member was adopting a definite stand in favour of his province.

It is not so much that I want to take sides for the province of Quebec, but I wonder what the Minister of Fisheries of Canada has decided to do about the province of Quebec, even about any province whatsoever.

I understand that it is stipulated that the minister must get information, ask for co-operation or make suggestions.

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Chairman, to save a little time, the hon. member might allow me

[Mr. Caouette.]

to clear up the matter he has just raised; I could give him the answer immediately, thus allowing the debate to proceed.

First of all, and the hon. member may not be aware of it, there is no Minister of Fisheries in the province of Quebec; there is a Minister of Industry, who looks after the commercial fisheries of the province of Quebec.

Mr. Caouette: The Minister of Game and Fish.

Mr. Robichaud: That does not exist any longer, it comes under the Minister of Industry, but relations between the Quebec government and the federal government are very favourable. We have had for a few years a federal-provincial committee on fisheries; we meet with the Quebec representative several times a year. We have joint projects on fisheries, research, demonstrations of new fishing methods, in the province of Quebec as well as in the other provinces; we also have some with the industries; in fact, we have some with the United Fishermen of Quebec. We have joint projects under which we make grants. We co-operate in the field of research with the universities of Quebec, whether it is Laval University or the University of Montreal.

I can assure the hon. member that our relations with Quebec are very favourable.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Chairman, we are not trying here to establish if the relations between the minister and the province of Quebec are very favourable; we are trying to establish whether or not the province of Quebec advised the Minister of Fisheries, as any crown minister of Canada, that from now on the joint programs will no longer be accepted, that the joint programs dictated or organized by the government of Ottawa will no longer be welcome in Quebec, that the Lesage government wants to assume its own responsibilities without the intervention of the ministers in Ottawa.

The Minister of Fisheries must be aware of that.

There is currently an election campaign going on in Quebec and these allegations are being used to prove that the Ottawa government has no say in Quebec. The friends of the Minister of Fisheries are saying that. I did not make it up. I am not sounding the alarm in Quebec, the friends of the Minister of Fisheries are.