

*Supply—Forestry*

agricultural matters were considerations revolving around ARDA, and the section of the estimates in his department that come under the heading of rural development.

As far as I am concerned, I am happy that today the discussion has confined itself so far to a discussion of the estimates of the Minister of Forestry, and has not gone into the whole area of the ARDA program. Perhaps we can expect this to a certain extent because of the discussion within the last few days on a bill. However, I felt at the time that there was some merit in the proposal put forward by the hon. member for Timiskaming. While I realize that it is difficult to draw hard and fast lines between the various departmental activities, I would like to supplement that proposition by a suggestion of mine. I know the standing committee which has been set up is known as the standing committee on agriculture, forestry and rural development, but as a member of the standing committee on fisheries, to which the current estimates of that department have been referred, I would like to suggest that in many ways there is a very close overlapping between the considerations involved in the estimates of the Department of Fisheries and those of the Department of Forestry. I say that, having in mind particularly the kind of operation which is being conducted by the federal Department of Forestry where the whole question of the research program into the control of forest pests is involved.

Also involved is the question of assisting the provinces in opening up forest access for the purpose of fire control and forest inventory, and the basic considerations of land use. Indeed I may say, Mr. Chairman, that only at the last sitting of the committee on fisheries, when we were dealing with the estimates of the fisheries research board, some of us in the committee were asking questions of our research scientists who were present before the committee about the correlation between the research programs of the Department of Forestry and those of the Department of Fisheries.

Therefore I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the minister give serious consideration to having his estimates relating specifically to forestry referred to a standing committee, where those estimates can be examined in a way similar to those of the Department of Fisheries. In making this suggestion I go back to the first point I raised, and that is that I believe there is too little understanding on the part of the members of the house and of

[Mr. Barnett.]

the people generally of the value of the programs which the federal Department of Forestry are conducting.

I freely admit that I have only a very hazy knowledge of the programs myself. However, from my experience as a member of the fisheries committee I do feel that in this field, as indeed in other fields, where the activities of qualified scientists are involved, there is a special value in the members of the house who are interested having the opportunity of sitting across the table from those who are conducting the programs, and to hear from them some explanation of their activities and the replies they give to questions which may be in our minds.

● (4:10 p.m.)

I hope, therefore, when the program for the consideration of estimates is being organized for the next fiscal year the minister and the government house leader will keep in mind the idea that this segment of the estimates should go to the standing committee on forestry. I would be almost inclined to say we should have a standing committee on fisheries and forests, because of the overlapping areas of activity which, in my view, is involved. I believe this suggestion would fit in very well with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Timiskaming, that members who are particularly interested in the agricultural field should have an opportunity of examining the rural development estimates in conjunction with the consideration of agriculture.

I recognize that there is an association between forestry and rural development. At the moment, I am not arguing that it is illogical that the Minister of Forestry should have the rural development administration under his jurisdiction. In spite of my temptation to pursue further the question of how the forests of British Columbia should be managed, which was raised by the hon. member for Cariboo, I will restrain myself and perhaps find an opportunity in some other form for discussing that question with him. I shall await the other items of the estimates, when perhaps we can ask questions about the operation of the research program and the nature of the program covered by the agreements with the provinces.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Choquette:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the Minister of Forestry a question