

Commercial Fisheries Development

any jurisdiction, whether it be a proposal such as the Fulton-Favreau formula, or others, involving constitutional revision, a situation develops which necessarily involves a good deal of time. In the context of the crisis in the fishing industry of British Columbia, in my view there might be a disastrous delay in taking full advantage of the proposals set forth in this bill, especially on the Pacific coast of Canada.

I feel that this is a situation which the house should be aware of as we consider this bill. I have heard the Premier of British Columbia make remarks from time to time about what a great Canadian he is, and how he is all for national unity and development. I must say that when it comes down to the practicality of a situation I am from time to time deeply disturbed by the very independent parochialism of attitude that is manifested in certain government quarters within the province from which I come. I hope the government of British Columbia, in the light of the introduction of this bill, will be prepared to take a much more practical approach to this question of fisheries development, and participation in such programs as the federal government is prepared to put forward for consideration jointly than has been indicated by the report of the committee. That report seems to me to take a rather technical and restrictive attitude as far as getting on with the job of expanding our commercial fisheries in British Columbia is concerned.

As we get into a consideration of the clauses of the bill, I may have some other remarks to make and questions to raise. I noted the remarks of the minister about the inter-relationship between this bill and the ARDA program. I was interested to hear his remarks in view of some questions I asked the Minister of Forestry not too long ago, when we were considering some changes to the operation of ARDA. In view of the fact that in practice ARDA has been participating in certain fisheries development projects, at least on the Atlantic coast of Canada, I expressed some concern that there might be overlapping with possible inefficiency in the operation of these two programs. I was glad to receive the assurance of the Minister of Fisheries, as indeed I received the assurance of the Minister of Forestry, that it is the desire in respect of these programs that they be integrated rather than operated as a duplication of effort.

With those remarks, Mr. Chairman, I would be glad to hear what other members of the committee may have to say during this discussion.

● (8:30 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Chairman, after hearing the remarks made by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, I would like to know what the minister intends to do about sections 3 and 4 dealing with federal-provincial relations in the field of Canadian fisheries.

The hon. member who has just resumed his seat was talking about British Columbia. Fisheries also present problems in the province of Quebec. We also have at the provincial level a Department of Fisheries.

Now, in Bill C-145, we read in section 3:

(1) The minister may undertake projects, (a) for the more efficient exploitation of fishery resources and for the exploration for and development of new fishery resources and new fisheries; (b) for the introduction and demonstration to fishermen of new types of fishing vessels and fishing equipment and of new fishing techniques; and (c) for the development of new fishery products and for the improvement of the handling, processing and distribution of fishery products.

Subsection 2 reads as follows:

The minister may enter into an agreement with any province providing for the undertaking jointly with the government of the province or any agency thereof of any project that the minister is authorized to undertake under subsection (1).

Well, Mr. Chairman, the present leaders of the province of Quebec state that joint programs no longer interest them. It remains to be determined what role the Minister of Fisheries of Canada can play with the Minister of Fisheries of the province of Quebec. I do not think that the federal minister can dictate anything to the province of Quebec. Besides, subsection 3 of the bill clearly stipulates that:

The minister may, with the approval of the governor in council, enter into an agreement with any province providing for the payment to the province of contributions in respect of the cost of any project that is undertaken by the government of the province or any agency thereof and that the minister is authorized to undertake under subsection (1).

● (8:40 p.m.)

But the province states that it does not need the minister. Now, under the circumstances, what is the value of Bill C-145 when a province decides to act on its own, outside joint programs, without the authorization or even the suggestions of the federal Minister of Fisheries?