

Rural Development

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the minister before resuming his seat could answer the question I raised about overlapping jurisdiction in the area of fisheries.

Mr. Sauvé: The hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett) raised problems in connection with the overlapping of various departments. Hon. members will notice that Bill No. C-145 is now being introduced, so this kind of program did not exist before. This is why we have entertained such programs. In any case, we never accept a project from any province unless it is approved by the federal department or departments involved. We cannot accept projects if a federal department thinks the province can do it better. In most instances these projects under ARDA are implemented by the provinces themselves, which means that the federal government does not have to set up the machinery to implement them. But there can be no overlapping because we do not accept any project unless it is approved by the federal department or departments concerned.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Rinfret in the chair.

On clause 1—

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I was opposed to this bill, and still am, for the very simple reason that I do not believe it is at all necessary. I am concerned about two matters. I have just received a copy of the French version of the bill. The French version has absolutely no relationship to the English version, no matter what we do with the terminology. I cannot read what it says in French so I shall not attempt to do so.

An hon. Member: The initials are different, too.

Mr. Peters: I hope it means the same thing, although as far as the initials are concerned I suppose it was very difficult to get "ARDA" out of the original bill in French and the minister has indicated that in the province of Quebec they call it something else.

If the Department of Justice advised the minister that the bill had to be amended in this way, I think the minister has an obligation to explain to us why the Department of Justice allow the building of fishing boats under the program we call ARDA, when fishing was not even mentioned in the original bill. There is no legitimate connection between fishing and rural development and

[Mr. Sauvé.]

agriculture. I have no objection to this program dealing with fishing. However, I have read the catalogue for the past six months and am very surprised to learn that most of the research in the province of Newfoundland as well as in several other provinces has been in connection with the fishing industry. They have even dealt with the construction of fishing vessels, the purchase of gear, the establishment of co-operatives and other matters that are concerned with the fishing industry.

I am opposed to making this change because we have not been given a satisfactory explanation of the advice given regarding the name of the previous act being in contravention of the law. The legal officers of the Department of Justice have apparently advised the minister that we would be in a better position if the name were changed, but I really do not understand the reason for this advice being given. I am very satisfied with the minister's explanation, but I do not understand why we were in contravention of the law in regard to the previous act and how our position is improved by making this change. Perhaps there is not an explanation. It is probably a highly technical, legal explanation.

A number of sections of ARDA involve almost completely unrelated things at the present time. There are the federal-provincial shared programs concerned with the development of a particular aspect of ARDA. Another section of the act refers to research which can be undertaken, initiated, financed and operated by the federal government. In view of this, Mr. Chairman, I wonder why the minister is opposed to including Bill No. C-151 as another clause of this bill.

Mr. Sauvé: Precisely for the reason dealt with by many members on the other side of the chamber. We do not want to alter the original act except by changing the word "agricultural" to "rural". We wanted to keep the same act because we felt it was a good act, and we were introducing a new measure for some other purposes, although they are related to the ARDA administration. We never had any intention of changing the original act, and that is why we presented amendments strictly in accordance with the request of the Department of Justice. I give my word that otherwise there would have been no amendment. As the minister concerned, I have no intention at all of changing the act.