

*Adjournment Debate*

Department of Regional Economic Expansion and what it has really meant to LRIS in particular. First of all, I think it is important to consider and understand what has happened in the past ten years, and then I will bring the hon. member up to date on the present situation as well as on what LRIS may offer in the future.

The federal government commitment in the past ten years was on a 75-25 basis with Ottawa paying approximately \$34 million. This means that phase I of the program is practically completed and at the end of the fiscal year, March, 1979, there will be four years remaining in phase II. This means in reality that the legal design for land titles is not complete. More than that, a computer support system design will almost be complete by the end of the fiscal year, so a great deal has been accomplished. Perhaps most important of all, several regional land title offices are ready to be turned over to the provinces. This, in effect, means some very valuable work has been completed and recorded and so will always be there.

In the past few years—and here I want to speak for a moment on a more personal note—I have used the small aerial photos and the larger ortho maps. I grant that in recent years hardly any of those have had the elevation contours on them, but nevertheless these maps were very useful and will be very useful for identifying property and property lines. So in reality there is great value in the money that has been spent.

That brings us up to the present. The work of the LRIS as an agency, as such, will be terminated by the end of the fiscal year, but until that time the federal government will continue to assist as we have been assisting up to this stage, even though there was no agreement since the end of March last year. This will be done through the original source, the Council of Maritime Premiers. Until the Council of Maritime Premiers has had an opportunity to do a full assessment of the valued work done and make a future commitment to land registration, I think it would be quite improper to influence or perhaps even jeopardize the decision it now had before it.

It is all very well to speak about accomplishments and spending money, but that is only part of the possible termination of LRIS. There are people involved who may lose their jobs. I have talked to many of them as I am sure the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) has, and I am as concerned as he is. The people at LRIS are all professionals, however, and I am confident that individuals of such high calibre will find jobs without too much trouble.

I think it is important to keep a few pertinent facts—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier):** Order, please. The hon. member's time has expired.

## FISHERIES—DEPLETION OF INSHORE LOBSTER FISHERY

**Miss Coline Campbell (South Western Nova):** Mr. Speaker, I rise regarding a question I put to the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. LeBlanc) on November 9 about the relationship between inshore and offshore lobster fishing, and particularly the closing of Browns Bank pending the outcome

[Mr. Wood.]

of this study. I do not trust statistics, having seen what they do with the UIC amendments, but the statistics since 1973, which is the first year I have been able to find statistics concerning district 4 offshore lobster fishing, show that the quantity of lobsters caught in district 4 has decreased.

● (2212)

In 1973 we had the first full year of offshore lobster fishing although fishing had commenced in 1972. The percentages of quantity offshore lobsters caught rise quite spectacularly between 1973 and 1977. There were eight boats fishing in that period and 2,800 inshore lobster fishermen who fish in district 4 from the end of November until the end of May under very hard circumstances. People like to eat lobsters and they consider lobster a delicacy. But it is a difficult task for the fishermen who have to go out at the end of November and into December at the beginning of the lobster season. However, the quantity of offshore lobster in comparison to the total quantity fished works out to 7.9 per cent in 1973, for a value of 6.6 per cent of the total catch. I am now referring to total offshore lobster fishing as related to total lobster fishing in district 4.

As I have mentioned, in 1973 the quantity was 7.9 per cent and the value of that quantity was 6.6 per cent. In 1974 the figure is 8.3 per cent of the total lobster catch for a value of 6.8 per cent. In 1975 the figure goes up to 10.3 per cent for a value of 7.7 per cent. In 1976 the figure is 17.8 per cent. In 1977, the figure goes down to 15.08 per cent in total quantity. In 1976 it went up to 13.2 per cent of the total value and came down to 11.2 per cent in 1977. In 1977 the only statistics available covered January to October. When we find out what the total offshore lobster catch was in 1977 I am sure we will find it comes close to that of the previous year.

As I have mentioned, the percentage in quantity of the offshore fishing in relation to the total catch has increased remarkably from 1973 to 1977 with only eight offshore lobster boats operating. At the same time, the inshore lobster fishery, which supports approximately 2,800 fishermen in district 4, has decreased. Starting in 1973 there were 5,299 metric tonnes of lobsters landed. In 1974 the figure was 4,404 metric tonnes, in 1975 the figure was 4,676 metric tonnes, in 1976 3,124 metric tonnes, and in 1977 covering January to October the figure is 2,516 metric tonnes. I have already shown what percentage of the total this is.

● (2217)

I regret we are allocated such a short time. However, the history of this problem between the inshore and offshore lobster fishermen has gone on since the commencement of the offshore fishery late in summer of 1971 with the banning of the sale of swordfish in Canada. The swordfish was banned at that time because of its unacceptable mercury content. As a result, the offshore lobster fishery was set up with only two restrictions. One was that they use lobster traps rather than other trawls which the Americans used. The second was that they not be allowed to fish within a 50-mile radius.