

Fisheries

as fresh water fisheries, for instance, which have always been considered as a solely provincial matter.

• (4:00 p.m.)

Now, if Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario deem it advisable to set up that Corporation, why do they not get together to do so? It would then be possible to prevent the Corporation from favouring certain provinces unduly. I agree whole-heartedly that the various areas should co-operate in improving marketing conditions in that industry. But, what I would like to know is whether that Corporation which in a way will regulate operations in four provinces, will not hamper the same industry in those provinces which are not members of it? Will not the taxes levied in Quebec be used to help the fishing industry elsewhere, to the detriment of the Quebec industry, which is extremely well off?

When this type of bill is proposed, I wonder whether we should not wait until there is agreement between all the provinces, in order to be sure that each will get a fair deal. I feel that this is another example of what often happens when the government seems to look for excuses to interfere in provincial affairs.

The government might perhaps make suggestions, but most of the time, it could wait until the provinces ask for a thing like this.

It would certainly be a good thing in my opinion, if trade pertaining to the freshwater fish industry were coordinated across Canada. Such coordination, however, would require the co-operation of all contracting parts. Such are the questions that come to my mind.

There have been endless discussions, which reached their peak in December, about ways of accelerating the proceedings of the house.

There is a very good way to achieve that. It would be, for Ottawa, to mind its own business and to let the provinces take care of their own problems. If matters under provincial jurisdiction happen to need coordination or planning, it will be up to the provinces to seek the co-operation of the federal government, if necessary. The reason why we are always short of time, to the point of considering the possibility of limiting debates under section 16A, is that there are several fields where the federal government concerns itself with matters that are none of its business. If one would confine oneself to one's own field, I think we might settle, partly at least, the problem of speeding up the proceedings of the house.

[Mr. Matte.]

I would like all these questions to be answered, so that we may know why some provinces do not co-operate. Of course, those which do not have such an industry are not interested and this is most understandable. In other fields, however, it should be possible to establish bodies to deal with all the business of all Canada. Of course, in areas where there is no such industry, the province would not be interested. However, in the case of an industry such as this particular one—and we know that in a state like Quebec it can grow into a very prosperous one—I wonder why the federal government, whose field it is, suggests establishing a Corporation which will deal only with the provinces that agree to co-operate.

Therefore, it is advisable to give it serious consideration before passing such a bill; consideration must be given to any possible consequences and if we do not watch for those things, we will have once more to bear with recriminations from Quebec and once again the rest of Canada will have the opportunity to say: If things are not going well in Quebec, it should simply get organized as we are, and so on.

When the federal government has to spend money, it must do it equitably. We must of necessity be just in the sense that when the federal government deals with matters which are not of particular concern to it, we must reach an agreement with all the provinces, and not with just a few, before legislation is passed. It is this point in particular which I want to emphasize.

I would not want the provinces concerned to think that we are opposed to the progress of this industry but if four provinces and one territory are interested in the setting up of that Corporation, they should do it themselves, and the federal government should not do it alone without the previous consent of all the provinces.

I should like to have an answer to all my questions so that we would really know whether this is another blow aimed at provincial autonomy.

[*English*]

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, in commenting on the freshwater fish marketing bill at this stage of its passage through the house I should like to make a few remarks thereon. Many of my comments will be in the form of questions to which I hope to obtain answers in order to ascertain how the act will function once it is brought