

*Supply—Fisheries*

own words as an introduction to my question. I asked the following question:

Speaking of our native Indian people, there is another matter I would like to ask about, if I could and that is the fishing vessels assistance regulations which the Department of Fisheries operate, and which apply solely to the four Atlantic provinces and the province of Quebec but which do not apply to the province of British Columbia. What is happening? Are any steps being taken to extend the operation of those regulations to British Columbia?

Mr. Levelton, the director of the conservation and protection branch, then said:

Yes, especially in view of the communication between yourself and Mr. Tremblay when he was minister of citizenship and immigration, relating to the desire of native Indian people in B.C. to come under these regulations.

Mr. Howard: I would like to know what is happening.

Mr. Robichaud: Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is not that this regulation is only applicable to the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, but we have now had meetings with the governments of Ontario, the prairie provinces and British Columbia and this regulation is applicable to those provinces who have a fisherman loan board, with whom we can deal.

There is a special case to be made in the case of the native Indians, and the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources has been recently studying the possibility of introducing a special assistance program based on the same principle that we have on the Atlantic coast, which would be made applicable to the native Indian. We in the Department of Fisheries have offered all the assistance possible in order to determine the regulations applicable to such a program. I sincerely hope we will have something to put into effect before too long, in this regard.

Now I should like to ask the minister the almost identical question, namely what is happening?

Mr. Robichaud: I am happy to reply to the question put to me by the hon. member for Skeena. What I said last year was correct. It is our intention to extend these fishery assistance programs to the west coast. We have already had a number of meetings with representatives of the provincial government of British Columbia and of the prairie provinces. We have already extended to Ontario the insurance scheme for the protection of fishing vessels.

With reference to the special assistance program for the Indians, we have had a number of meetings with the representatives of the department of Indian affairs. In fact a certain sum is now suggested for this assistance program, but we find it is much too small. We wish to reconsider the amount now made available, and I hope we will be able to come to a final decision within a very short time. It

[Mr. Howard.]

is our intention to establish on an experimental basis a special assistance program for the Indian fishermen on the west coast.

Mr. Howard: The minister said that a certain sum was available. Could he tell us the amount and through which department it would be provided?

Mr. Robichaud: Through the department of Indian affairs. All the details required for the application of this program have been supplied by the Department of Fisheries, but the fund will be administered by the department of Indian affairs. As I said, we feel that a substantial amount should be made available so that the program would be practicable.

Mr. Howard: Did the minister say that it is available now?

Mr. Robichaud: No, Mr. Chairman, it is not available now but I understand there will be further discussions within a week or two to finalize the decision.

Mr. Howard: I understood the minister to say that a certain amount of money is available now but that it is not sufficient. However he has cleared up this point for me.

Mr. Robichaud: What I said was that we found the amount suggested to be too small to make the program practicable.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, as no one wishes to have the floor I should like to raise another matter at this time. It relates to the regulations of the department regarding fresh water supplies for canneries. I have written to the minister about this, as these regulations might have an adverse effect on a couple of canneries just outside of Prince Rupert. I am not trying to get him to alter the regulations and I do not think the people affected would like them altered. What I wish to do is to draw his attention to an awkward situation which may develop as a result of the implementation of the regulations requiring fresh water.

As I understand it, some financial assistance has been made available to canneries and to communities on the Atlantic coast to enable them to provide the water supply to the canneries necessary to meet the regulations promulgated by the department. I believe this financial assistance has come from the Atlantic Development Board and not directly from the Department of Fisheries, even though the federal government contributes toward the operation of the Atlantic Development Board. Indirectly the federal taxpayer's