

Government Organization

• (8:40 p.m.)

However, in my opinion, the change need not be so disturbing to our people socially as was first anticipated, providing that the moves are made gradually after careful planning by the industry and the provincial and federal governments. Communications are a vital part of this program. If good highways are built to provide easy access from country areas to the centralized fishing centres then fishermen and fish packers will have little difficulty in commuting to their places of work. This type of living is preferred by many Canadians; and though travelling to and from work for a considerable distance is time consuming, many prefer travelling instead of living in congested areas where rents for accommodation are generally very high. I may say, Mr. Chairman, that in today's society it is almost impossible to obtain suitable accommodation in the congested centres of Canada. However, before beginning on a program of centralized growth centres for the fishing industry, the federal government should realize that it must also be willing to share in the cost of highway construction in the provinces concerned so that easy access may be provided for people living in the country to established growth centres. I urge the government to give a problem of this magnitude top priority for discussion at future federal conferences so that the provinces and the federal government may co-operate on this matter to the best advantage of all concerned.

Finally I point out to the minister responsible for fisheries and forestry that his announced policy for the fishing industry has already helped in that it has given our people new hope where little hope had existed for the past two years. But this policy alone will not cover all problems of the fishing industry. If he and his officials are thinking in terms of developing centralized growth centres in the early 1970's, the time to start planning those centres is now. A study should be made of all existing plants processing fresh fish, salt fish and frozen fish blocks. The areas surrounding these plants should be studied in an effort to determine the distances travelled by existing fishermen and plant workers. I am glad to see the Minister of Public Works present in the house. I submit that the Department of Fisheries and Forestry ought to work in co-operation with the Department of Public Works to determine what will be potential growth centres, so that funds may be earmarked for suitable wharves, breakwaters, skidways,

freshwater supplies, channel and harbour lights as well as suitable dredging programs to take care of today's modern trawlers.

The Minister of Fisheries and Forestry ought to be working in co-operation with the minister responsible for regional economic expansion on the type of planning to which I have alluded. There is one thing I should like to know, however. Who will take initiatives? Who will go ahead with these types of projects? In my native province of Nova Scotia, when the captain of a ship becomes ill and the mate takes over, unless there is agreement between the mate and the bos'n on the course that will be followed, that ship will go around in circles. If the ship is in port and the captain is not aboard that ship will not even begin its voyage. That may illustrate one of the weaknesses of this bill. It defines certain powers for the minister responsible for regional development; it gives certain powers to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, there are 15 parts to the bill, and powers are divided so greatly that one may wonder from which source the initiatives to begin much needed projects will come. I hope that as a result of the provisions of this legislation one minister will not say, "Let George do it," and shrug off his responsibilities. That is the danger inherent in this type of legislation. Organization and co-operation with all governmental departments whose activities are in any way related to the fishing industry should be the watchwords of the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry in the next few years. Only through well planned and well co-ordinated programs can the Atlantic fishery reach its full potential and play its role in the future growth and development of the Atlantic provinces.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, I intend to speak only on that part of Bill C-173 dealing with fisheries and forestry. My remarks will be confined to part I. I am sorry that the minister responsible for fisheries in the Conservative government, the hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. MacLean), is not here. I am sure he could have made some interesting observations on the matter under consideration.

Our party, Mr. Chairman, does not object strongly to the establishment to the new Department of Fisheries and Forestry. We do not see any sinister motives behind the desire to establish it. By the same token, we see no great point, in the light of past experience, in establishing it. No doubt the minister will justify the government's position. He is a