

The Address—Mr. Lundrigan

Around our coasts we have a few thousand communities whose wharfage and fishing facilities have enabled them to earn their livelihood. Fishing is one of the three major industry-producing endeavours in our economy. I wish I had in the House the letter I received from the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing) regarding these facilities, because they are now being allowed to deteriorate. People in Ottawa have decided that no longer should the rural economies be encouraged. That decision has been made in Ottawa, though it has also been encouraged by the province of Newfoundland which is now suffering under a rather insane political set-up.

The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand), who made such an impassioned plea in the House last Saturday, talks of changing the system through the political democratic processes at our disposal. But he will not accept the fact that continually we try to drive home to him and to the government that the fishing economy of the province of Newfoundland needs to be fostered and developed instead of undermined and allowed to perish.

Since I do not have the letter that I received from the minister, let me try to summarize its contents. It was written by the Minister of Public Works and concerns a community called Salvage, one of a dozen communities in my riding that is urgently in need of fishing facilities. In this community there are 30 boats, fishing craft, and they provide employment for almost every person in the community. In addition there are four long-liners. I do not know the value of the boats in Salvage, but some of them are worth \$20,000 and employ five family men. Each man makes a living from the operations of the long-liners; at the same time, these vessels provide much needed employment ashore.

The minister informed me that he could not justify acceding to their demand for a \$12,000 slipway so they can pull the boats ashore periodically to repair the bottoms, overhaul engines, re-paint and so on, because there has not been an increase in fishing activity in that community. In other words, he is telling them that the government is not prepared to construct a \$12,000 fishing facility to enable the men to continue earning their livelihood.

In Newfoundland there are very few urban communities: we have St. John's, Gander, Corner Brook and Grand Falls. About a dozen communities have populations of around 10,000, and only one has about 100,000. Perhaps 25 per cent or even less of our population is living in urban communities. The rest is made up basically of people living in a rural environment. About 1,000 communities are made up basically of people who are involved in the industry of farming to a very minor extent, in forestry to a very major extent, and in fishing to a very major extent. When we became a province 21 years ago, we did not have a well developed fishery but we were in the midst of great fishing resources. We asked Canada then, and we ask Canada today, to help us develop this resource and make ours a great fishing economy so that when it is developed we may contribute to the wealth of Canada.

[Mr. Lundrigan.]

• (5:10 p.m.)

Perhaps hon. members do not realize that the fishing industry was the original, staple industry of the Canadian nation, followed by farming and forestry or whichever came first. Perhaps the farming industry came after forestry, because it was the industry which helped develop and spread the nation to the west where the great, primary industry of farming became the basic development. For two centuries fishing was a well developed industry, long before the rest of Canada was even heard about or developed.

Last year there was talk of a great regional development program for the province of Newfoundland. We rose in the House day after day, to the chagrin of most members of our caucus and many members of the House of Commons, and talked about the need for a fisheries policy encompassing the fishing industry. Several months later we heard that the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion was going to announce a major development program for our province. He announced that millions of dollars were going to be spent on it. That money is only now beginning to be spent. The very strange thing about this program is that not a single penny of federal funds is going into the development of our fisheries resources. All this money is being channelled into infrastructure, whoever in God's name manufactured that word.

I should like to know who is making these decisions. They are quiet people in the province of Newfoundland, but I could tell the House a few stories about changes of attitude in the province which will manifest themselves loud and clear in the not too distant future. How can you expect these people to sit back for many generations and tolerate the fact that those planning future development in Newfoundland are not paying one bit of attention to their demands?

This is what is happening because the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, working in co-operation with the provincial government, has decided that in Newfoundland there should be about 50 communities instead of 1,000. Their biggest contribution to Newfoundland, as they see it, is to foster a healthy resettlement program under which people are brought from a rural to an urban economy, because they believe the kind of economy we have now should be modelled on Montreal. Montreal has a great many street lights, a beautiful sewer system, a great deal of smog and pollution, unrest, disturbance, heavy traffic, rented homes and rented houses. They have high-rise apartments where you can live on the fifth or the fiftieth floor.

Last year the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) replied to, I believe it was the hon. member for St. John's East, "who wants to live in a rustic Newfoundland outpost where you may even have to tolerate things like out-houses", and called it the "pastoral syndrome" when we suggested he should listen to the people of our province. Perhaps many of them would like to live in rustic out-ports. Many Newfoundlanders want to live in these areas, carrying on the work of their forefathers. They cherish this attitude which in Newfoundland has been passed down through the last five centuries. Perhaps they want