

*Fisheries Act*

There has been no past practice to provide for the very sudden changes in policy that will be permitted under the proposals in this Bill.

There are some questions as to the relationship between our fisheries and that of the United States, the particular agreements that we work out between our two countries and the means whereby we administer those agreements. We are not certain that those are fair. All of the industry people still are not certain that a consensus has been reached.

The process of Parliament and the activities of the fishery people would be best served if this Bill were given a hoist and if further study went into it. As a consequence, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Epp):

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor:

"Bill C-32, an Act to amend the Fisheries Act, be not now read a second time but that it be read a second time this day six months hence."

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

The Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Alt-house) may continue his speech.

**Mr. Althouse:** I think, Mr. Speaker, I have made my point that the Bill should be hoisted, and I rest my case.

• (1115)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) speaking on questions and comments or on debate?

**Mr. Skelly:** On questions and comments.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Very well.

**Mr. Skelly:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse) made a very wise decision to recommend to the House the hoisting of this legislation for six months. It is apparent that the Government is asking for some extremely wide powers, almost absolute powers, to allocate fish. For many, many years, we in the House of Commons have listened to Conservative opposition Members condemn the abuse of what was virtually absolute power by the previous Liberal Government, only to see them turn around and repeat the sins for which they cursed the other Party.

There is no doubt that we cannot allow a Bill establishing this kind of absolute power to proceed through the House of Commons without having the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) give the House in written form the guidelines by which this allocation will take place. Will he in fact ensure that each of the traditional fisheries now present in the industry will have a place? Will these fishermen be entitled to their traditional shares? Will the Minister make a commitment that there will be an effective consultative process before those shares of the catch are changed? Will this be done by consensus or through some acceptable form of agreement?

These are the kinds of questions the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre has provided the House an opportunity to consider.

In addition, it was a very wise move on the part of the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre and the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Epp) to allow the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) an opportunity to put on the record how the Government will honour the election promises it made and how it will develop a set of guidelines for a fair and equitable approach to allocation of the resource. It is surprising that the Government itself has not sought an opportunity to do this. After all, we have witnessed the mismanagement of the fisheries resource for years and years. Many people supported the Conservative Party because of the promises it made in the firm belief that Conservative Members would not repeat some of the sins of members of the previous Government who made decisions in a very arbitrary fashion, decisions which in some cases were very harmful. For many years, the loudest voice and the squeakiest wheel got the grease.

Just for the sake of argument, let us say that every fish is worth \$10. We are taking a horrendous pile of \$10-bills and allocating them. The Minister would then have the absolute right to allocate that money to the fisheries on the West Coast and even presumably to the fisheries on the East Coast. The Minister would then have the absolute power to determine who receives money, who has the right to earn a living and who has the right to acquire income. I believe the Government has an obligation to give to the House of Commons and the people of Canada an indication of how this will take place.

The Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre and the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon made a very responsible and serious move by placing this motion before the House because the track record of the present Government in two extremely important areas, the areas of keeping election promises and of treating people fairly, has not been good. This motion will give the Government an opportunity to justify its activities.

Just to make a few quick points in support of this hoist motion, we know that the Government promised a co-management mechanism. We know that it promised that there would be a \$200-million salmon enhancement program. We know that it promised a buy-back program worth \$100 million. Those promises have fallen by the wayside, or at least we know nothing of them because the Minister refuses to appear before the committee to lay any guidelines before us. He just allows this Bill to roll merrily along through the House. It is known far and wide that the Conservative Government has an overwhelming number of Members. Those Members can stomp into the earth any initiative which is taken by the Opposition to obtain some equity and fairness for the people of Canada. They can do that and they have demonstrated it.

• (1120)

There are three examples of broken promises in this one industry. I would like to speak about the question of fairness.