

Supply

caught. Has the supply of lobster in your area decreased over the last 15 years?

I know that this year you had an oversupply of lobsters and a poor price. The actual supply of lobsters, because of the size caught by the lobster fishermen, has it gone down? We have been catching lobsters for a good long time. It has been a good marketable entity for Canadian fishermen into the U.S. and other markets. Has the volume of the lobster catch decreased?

Mr. McGuire: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question. The volume of lobster in Prince Edward Island has been steadily increasing over this past 10 years, since 1978. Not only has the volume been increasing, but the price to the fishermen has been decreasing. In the fishery sector it is the bread and butter of our total fishery.

This year, because of the stagnant markets and the inventories that exist in Europe, and particularly in the United States, we have been unable to get rid of our present inventories, which has resulted in a depression of our prices. If we had to abide by this proposed American legislation on top of having an overabundance of lobster on our hands now, this would be a disastrous year. Instead of a poor year it would be a disastrous year.

Mr. MacAulay: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Egmont for his fine message. I am well aware that he was born and reared in a fishing area and is well aware of the role of small craft harbours and repair to harbours.

I was wondering if he is having any of the problems I am having in Grahams Pond and Savage Harbour and MacAuley's Wharf. Along with being a major problem for the fishermen, a place to put their traps and tie up their boats, it has also become an environmental problem. We also have a problem at Sturgeon Wharf. In Savage Harbour we are having major problems with the black wall. If these things are not repaired in my district, it is going to create a major problem. Are there any of those problems in your district?

Mr. McGuire: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Cardigan for his question. The underfunding of small craft harbours in Prince Edward Island is an ongoing concern to the fishermen. There is more to fishing than just going out and fishing. They

need a safe harbour and wharf facilities in order to do the job properly.

For example, the harbour of Tignish, which is one of the largest harbours in Prince Edward Island, needs about a million dollars in repairs now, which is not going to happen this year. This is causing a lot of hardship to our fishermen.

I just want to say that the budget for small craft harbours, as far as P.E.I. is concerned, is really poor. We need a lot of extra investment in our fishery so we can have safe harbour and good fishing facilities for our fishermen.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the motion on the government's record with respect to workers in communities involved in Canada's fishing industry.

The Canadian fishing industry is and always has been an integral part of the country's economic framework. It has been the lifeblood of many Canadians for hundreds of years. Yet, while this industry has a long and proud history in our country, it is, and not for the first time, facing a difficult period created by depleting stocks and changes in international marketing conditions.

Despite these circumstances I want to assure those men and women who make their living from the industry that the federal government is well aware of their situation and is working hard to develop measures to help them through this period. Indeed, this is in keeping with our track record. We were there before when the fishing industry workers needed us. We are there now, and I promise you we will be there in the future.

As you know, Madam Speaker, the fishing industry is a volatile one, affected by weather, market and conditions not under its control. This reality has compelled the fishing industry to be both flexible and adaptable. Likewise, we will show equal flexibility in ensuring that our programs and services meet the needs of the communities and the workers affected.

Any response to that industry must be viewed within a larger international perspective. Change and volatility are the watch words of our times. I might say that I was recently in Manilla in a factory that was making the huge drift-nets for the Pacific. I was trying to dissuade them. I saw their huge nets being made for tuna fishing, three times the size of anything we have seen before, and new