

Fisheries

a reply to it must begin with a re-examination of the temporal and conceptual background. It is particularly important that we trace our way back to the events that led to the present combination within one federal department of various components which previously, to one degree or another, functioned separately.

The department of fisheries was established as a separate entity about 40 years ago. We have learned a lot since then, environmentally speaking. In 1968 the fisheries department was amalgamated with forestry. Four years ago, in 1971, came a much larger move toward unification, the creation of the Department of the Environment. The choice of this name was in itself not simply a matter of new symbolism but a reflection of changed perceptions, a new way of looking at the world and at ourselves, not only in Canada but throughout the world.

The creation of Environment Canada was a response by the people of this country, through their government, to a challenge which, although it did not sneak up on us overnight, did shock and startle the world because of the abruptness of our recognition and the immensity of the threat. It was not that we had not been warned. Ecologists, conservationists, wildlife people, people who specialized in meteorology, in fisheries, in the uses of land, had all warned us for years that trouble was on the way. The fact that at a governmental level these warnings were coming from different offices, from separate observation posts, was in itself an indication of the kind of trouble we were in, in Canada and elsewhere on this spaceship we call Earth.

The great service done for us by people like the late Rachel Carson was that they reconnected us with reality. They opened the eyes of the world to the inter-relationship of the various components of the biosphere. More important, they gave back to an urban world a country person's sometimes native recognition of the fact that we are not strangers or separate in the biospheric mosaic. They reminded us that we do not so much come into this world as out of it.

As we commenced this voyage of rediscovery, it became very clear that the problems of the environment were, at their core, problems of human perception; not the result of malevolence or greed, but mostly of a failure to see that everything was connected to everything else. We were in trouble because of a fragmented, unreal perception of the physical world and an exaggeration of its capacity to absorb abuse.

The next phase was to do something about changing our thinking. In arriving at true environmental wisdom, part of the task has been to avoid mistaking the symptoms for the cause. Polluted rivers and streams and coastal areas, smoke stained skies, thermal inversions, possibly even weather fluctuations, were the outward manifestations not of a self-destructive attack by man on the environment but of a distorted comprehension of the way that this infinitely intricate biospheric engine works and fits together.

Mr. Whittaker: The hon. member uses big words.

Mr. McGrath: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I say, with the greatest respect, that the hon. member is not

addressing himself to my motion and that the rule of relevancy applies even to parliamentary secretaries.

Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo): Madam Speaker, I thought my remarks were extremely relevant. I have always assumed that in private members' hour members are given some latitude. In any event, if we are to invoke the rule of relevancy I suggest it should also apply to the remarks the hon. member made earlier.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. The parliamentary secretary should deal primarily with the motion before the House.

Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo): Madam Speaker, I was addressing myself to the motion.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): And talking it out in the process.

Mr. Crouse: Madam Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? I have listened with great interest to what the hon. member said. I am looking at a full page advertisement which lists 34 items put out by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the representatives of his party during the July 8 election campaign. As item 24, the Prime Minister stated under "fisheries" that he would appoint a full-time minister to administer the fisheries program. Unfortunately this has not been done. We have a Minister of State for fisheries. How does the hon. member relate his comments to the pledge made to the people of Atlantic Canada that we would have a full-time minister with sufficient clout to look after the immense problems the fisheries are facing at this time?

• (1650)

Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo): Madam Speaker, the answer to that question is self-evident. As stated by the hon. member who introduced the resolution, we have a minister who is working full time. He is a very good minister. He understands the problems of the fishing industry. This minister is working extremely well with the whole community of fishermen.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo): Since the name of the problem was fragmentation—tunnel vision—it followed that we must avoid compartmentalized and ill-co-ordinated solutions. The goal, as many of our young people put it, has been to get our thinking together.

The creation of the federal Department of the Environment was a signal that the government of Canada was determined to the fullest practical extent to begin our response by bringing our approaches into a co-ordinated pattern. It was decided not to strike simply at symptoms, not only to control, not only to cure or to rollback, but to prethink and prevent. It was decided, for example, that the problem of eutrophication or any other form of pollution in the Great Lakes, or air pollution in Toronto or Montreal, or the conservation of the polar bear, or the salmon, or the optimum use of land, were all part of one major operation, the preservation and enhancement of the Canadian environment.

[Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo).]