

the President of the Treasury Board upon the Minister of Fisheries.

I will refer to another matter which we should never forget. It was brought home last night by fishermen from British Columbia. I asked them whether they realized they would have to pay for telephone calls to the weather office. They said that they did not have to pay for them. I indicated that it was a new policy of the Government of Canada, the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Blais-Grenier), and they said they had to call the weather office every day for updates. It is an example of something which will have an effect right down the line. That charge is being imposed upon the Canadian public, supposedly to increase revenues to the Government of Canada by some \$2 million. The fact of the matter is that fishermen in British Columbia, in Newfoundland, on the East Coast, in the Great Lakes and in the freshwater systems, will hesitate to telephone the weather office when they know they will have to pay. That is what is wrong with this policy. We do not want to discourage them from telephoning for weather updates because their safety is involved. If they pause before making that telephone call because they have to pay for it, and perhaps cannot afford it, we are into a very dangerous area. However, that subject has not been discussed to any great degree in this Chamber. Perhaps it is one of the most important matters relating to fishermen.

The authority being requested by the Bill is not a new one. It is an authority which the Minister of Fisheries thought he always had. There are some new areas included in the Bill, but its general thrust is to give the Minister authority for something he has always done but did not know he could not do legally. As members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry know, fishermen appearing before them are not happy with the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans or with the Minister. They are not happy with resource allocation or with the distinguishing between gear types which brought on this Bill. The court judge said, "Minister of Fisheries, you cannot allocate fish according to gear types". That is a sore point with fishermen right across this country.

● (1210)

For the benefit of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, let me say that it varies from area to area. It has been a big problem over the last 10 or 15 years. That is why the Ministry of Fisheries is asking for authority under this Bill to impose quotas on gear types of social and economic reasons, not for conservation and protection of the stock. It is a very unusual area with which the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is dealing. Fishermen right across this country will bear out the truth of that statement. I will give just two short examples.

A few years ago when you talked to fishermen dealing with the cod fishery, they said that the Government of Canada and the provincial Governments were saying that they should have a new gear type, commonly referred to as the Japanese cod trap. They were saying that because it gives better quality fish. It is a trap with a bottom, a side and a top. The fish come in and swim around continually. They are alive. When you open

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the top of the net, you just tip the fish into the boat. Regardless of how long that net is in the water, the fish are alive.

This was promoted. The Japanese cod trap in the early 1970s cost \$8,500 made up. Some fishermen were given nets by the Government. They were given to fishermen in selected areas of eastern Canada. It was a great thing for fishermen to have, no doubt about it. Better quality fish were caught.

But along came the problems associated with that gear type. The mesh was small. The holes in the net were small. When the fish got in, they could not get out, not even the small ones. When the salmon got in, only the very small ones could get out. Along came the problems of the salmon fishery. Fishermen were not allowed by law to keep the salmon in the net. They discovered that they were not allowed to sell any fish under 18 inches to a fish plant. The fishermen said, "We were told that this was our salvation, that this was the best way for us to get good quality fish and to get a better price for them".

When you talk about gear types today, you are not talking about Japanese cod traps, which were heralded as being better than a gillnet on the bottom of the ocean, which killed the fish by drowning them. We do not talk about Japanese cod traps any more. They are now a bad thing. Every conservation group, every fisheries officer and the fishermen agree that it is a bad thing because it catches small fish that cannot be sold. In some cases it kills fish in the leader of that Japanese cod trap.

Where has the Department of Fisheries gone now? Now it has gone to trawls. They now tell the fishermen the gillnet is no good any more because it drowns fish. The Japanese cod trap catches small fish which cannot be sold. It traps salmon, sometimes kills them, and they have to be thrown away. That is a bad gear type. Now the fishermen are to go to trawls.

Trawls are hook and line. That is bait. They say you get a better quality fish with a trawl. The fisheries people across this country today are being told that the salvation is the trawl. They have gone from this gear type to another gear type to another gear type.

This Bill talks about gear types. The Government of Canada was promoting different gear types and asked fishermen to catch herring through the ice. They were paid \$4.20 a hour. That was only four years ago. They were encouraged to put out gillnets. In those same areas of Canada today, there is no quota. The scientists claim that all the herring are gone. However, it was only a short time ago that the Department of Fisheries was paying people to catch herring. They were encouraged to catch that particular species.

When you talk about gear types and the allocation of a resource to gear types to fishermen, and the fact that this Bill gives this authority, the fishermen say, "What about this and what about that? Why was this mistake and that mistake made? Don't talk to me about gear types. Don't talk to me about the Minister of Fisheries allocating gear types to fishermen in this country because the Government has a pretty poor record to go on".