

*Fisheries Improvement Loans Act*

example, the province of Prince Edward Island which constitutes less than 5 per cent of the commercial fishery of Canada, if I am not mistaken, leads the list of provinces in the number of loans and the total amount of money borrowed under this act to date. The figures I have indicate that fishermen of that province have availed themselves of a total of 174 loans to a value of \$141,166. On the other hand the province of Newfoundland which according to my recollection constitutes 30 per cent of the commercial fishery of Canada is away down on the list. Only three loans representing a total value of \$1,240 have been applied for in Newfoundland since the inception of the act several years ago. I could confine my argument to this point alone to bring home to the minister the fact that the act as it now stands is most unsatisfactory in that it excludes a large group of fishermen in the Atlantic provinces and in Newfoundland in particular who prosecute what is known as the shore fishery but who are not eligible for loans under this act because they do not own equipment, boats or nets.

I would suggest to the minister that he give very serious consideration to this matter bearing in mind the statistics I have cited. I commend to his consideration the suggestion of the hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg that perhaps an amendment should be made to the present act which would make it more inclusive and thus embrace those sectors of the Canadian fishing industry that are in the greatest need of such legislation. I am speaking specifically now of the shore fishery of Newfoundland.

**Mr. Carter:** Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this resolution is to amend the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act by extending the period of its application to June 30, 1962. As one whose constituents are nearly all fishermen it is natural that I should support this resolution and since this resolution proposes to amend this act in one particular way this would appear an appropriate time to point out to the minister where other changes are required so that consideration may be given to further amendments which aim at improving the effectiveness of this legislation.

The minister has heard a number of suggestions proposed by previous speakers the effect of which would tend to broaden the application of the legislation and increase the number of projects for which loans may be secured. I wish to support wholeheartedly the suggestion made by the hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg that there should be a greater variety of equipment included

under this legislation. Many fishermen are at a disadvantage because their particular type of equipment is not insurable. The lobster fisherman can insure his lobster traps but the salmon fisherman cannot insure his salmon net and the herring fisherman cannot insure his herring seine or his herring net. It very often happens that long liners have their gear destroyed through various causes. The only way the loss can be compensated is through securing a loan. This is the kind of need this legislation was intended to meet.

I also wish to support the suggestions made by the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi with respect to increasing the period of repayment and making the payments easier for the fishermen. As the minister pointed out this legislation was introduced by the Liberal government some three years ago. During that three year trial period we have learned many things from firsthand experience.

As the hon. member for St. John's East has just pointed out, our experience in Newfoundland has been that this legislation is not effective at all. In fact, its effect is so small as to be insignificant. There have been three loans for the whole province of Newfoundland during the past 3½ years. I put a question on the order paper last year soliciting that information. I am reading now from page 2080 of *Hansard* of July 9, 1958, question No. 142, which reads as follows:

1. How many loans have been granted to fishermen in Newfoundland from the fishermen's small loans fund for each year up to the present date?
2. What is the amount of each loan?

Answer by: Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance):

It is assumed that the hon. member is referring to loans made under the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act.

1. Three.
2. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information which is a matter of customer and bank relationship.

I would like to suggest to the minister that he need not have been quite so niggardly in his supplying of information as he appeared to be when he answered my question, because the hon. member for St. John's East has just put on the record the fact that the total of those loans amounted to \$1,240 and that was the amount for the three loans. Surely, this could have been disclosed without in any way injuring the customer and bank relationship.

The figures put on the record by the hon. member for St. John's East disclosed also, if his information is up to date, that there have been no further loans made since the date in question, namely July 9, 1958. There must be a reason why so few fishermen are taking advantage of this legislation. It is well