

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 12, 1985

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FISHERIES ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, March 11, consideration of the motion of Mr. Fraser that Bill C-32, an Act to amend the Fisheries Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to make a few comments on the speech of the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) last evening.

Mr. Speaker: Questions, comments and answers.

Mr. Manly: I was very interested to hear the Hon. Member point out that at an earlier phase in his career he had served as a deck-hand on the United Church mission vessel, *Thomas Crosby V*. Although the Hon. Member has sat behind me for the past several months, I did not realize that we had that previous connection. I also have some fairly extensive connections with the *Thomas Crosby V* which serves the West Coast of Canada. It moves up and down along the north Pacific coast of British Columbia and visits a great many fishing communities which are very important and can be affected by the impact of this Bill. From the time I was associated with the *Thomas Crosby V* until now, a number of these communities have suffered a great deal because of different changes which have taken place in the fishing industry. I recall the opposition in many of these communities to the Davis licensing plan which forced many Indian fishermen out of the industry. It was an attempt, as the Government at that time said, to rationalize the industry. Many people were rationalized and pushed right out of it. Communities like Klemtu which used to have a cannery no longer has one. We find more and more that the industry has been concentrated at Prince Rupert and in the lower mainland. In the last few years, the Port Edward area has suffered a great deal as more and more of the industry has been concentrated in the lower mainland.

This is a very important consideration in terms of this Bill. We would like some assurances from the Minister that the provisions of the Bill, which give almost absolute and total authority to the Minister and his Department, will not be used

in a way that will work against communities up and down the coast. The New Democratic Party is basically asking the Government to take a second look at the legislation. We are supposed to have a Chamber of sober second thought. We in the NDP do not really believe that we need that Chamber. We believe the Government can take a sober second look at legislation within the House of Commons. We do not need the Red Chamber to do it. This is why our Leader yesterday moved a motion to abolish the Senate. It is unfortunate that the Conservative Government backed down from its claims of last week that it was prepared to move on the issue. We are asking the Government to take a sober second look at the legislation.

We recognize that, as a result of the Collier decision last summer, there are certain things which the Government has to do to bring its fisheries legislation into line with what needs to be done. The Department of Fisheries needs to have the power to regulate the industry, but we say that if it is to have that power, it should be in a way that safeguards the industry. We do not want it to be an absolute power. It should be a power which the Department will be able to use to manage the industry consistent with conservation and social and economic goals that can be determined by the participants in the industry.

When the Minister spoke on this issue last February, he outlined a series of concerns. At the very top of the list was industry participation in management. He made some very tentative moves in that direction, but we have not seen the kind of assurances that this legislation is going to deal with that in a straightforward manner.

● (1110)

I see, Mr. Speaker, that you are motioning for me to stop. I commend the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) on his speech. I urge that the Minister take a second look at this legislation and give his assurance that our concerns will be met.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to debate Bill C-32, an Act to amend the Fisheries Act. This Bill has had a fair bit of debate in the last few days, I think with reason. The Fisheries Act has been criticized by some in my Party for not recognizing the need for full consultation by the participants in the industry. Our speakers have pointed out that the new amendments to the Act will rest a great amount of power with the Minister. In fact, he will have absolute power.

There is some doubt as to whether the powers that are being granted to the Minister are good for the industry. It is not clear how those powers will be implemented by the Minister.