

*Fisheries Ministry*

very real progress in international negotiations—which I was happy to note was acknowledged by the hon. member for St. John's East—and developing small craft harbours in the amount of \$35 million this fiscal year, as well as a host of other outstanding moves of benefit to Canada's fishermen.

The serious intent of the government to maintain a constant level of civil servants at this stage of our economic fortunes should not be taken lightly. Members opposite frequently criticize added senior appointments but in this case we have a request for more. It reminds me of those who demand cuts in government spending and then say "but not in my constituency". The Department of Fisheries has a Minister of State, and the Deputy Minister of Environment and Fisheries is the Deputy Minister of Fisheries, and therefore the provisos of this bill are unnecessary given the excellent job being done by senior personnel in fisheries administration at this point in time.

I too should like to offer my congratulations to my colleagues and neighbour.

**Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova):** Madam Speaker, I understand that the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Baker) is anxious to make a few remarks so I will be fair with him and keep my speech short so that he may have an opportunity to participate in this debate. I should also like to tender my congratulations to him on his new appointment.

I merely want to say that in my constituency which has many concerns relating to the fishing industry there is a great deal of dissatisfaction, and I think justly so. This applies not only to Nova Scotia but all over the Atlantic region. The fishing industry is in trouble. There is no question about it.

Although the present Minister of State (Fisheries) (Mr. LeBlanc) is doing his best to remedy these troubles—and I must say he is off to a good start; his public image is excellent and he is certainly well accepted—I think it is only fair to do two things this afternoon so far as I am concerned. The first is to support the principle put forward in Bill C-251 by my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), and to suggest that while I am doing so I ought to bring to the attention of the House once more some of the long-standing difficulties that plague this industry.

Everyone who has followed the fishing industry knows that it is in great difficulty. The quota system as it is being applied in the Atlantic region is ridiculous, as the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse) has pointed out so many times, when valuable species of fish are being dumped and wasted simply because the quota system is unrealistic. Everyone knows that even in the field of unemployment insurance fishermen do not get the same break as their counterparts in other industries.

The curtailment of the small craft and harbours program is just another example of the fact that the Minister of State for Fisheries does not have the clout or the influence he ought to have at a time when, as the last member said, there are great international implications involved implicitly in what the fishing industry and the Department of the Environment are trying to do. It is pretty obvious that the Department of the Environment is not working out as one would hope it should. It is a vast,

[Mrs. Campagnolo.]

sprawling department in which the fishing industry, or what used to be a separate ministry of fisheries, and what used to be a separate ministry of forestry are merged, or rather submerged.

● (1650)

There were studies and talks about applied biological principles, but they did not appear to do very much. One of the things the present Department of Fisheries needs is an influx of some people who have a modicum of practical experience in fisheries. I have been informed, and I believe it to be true, that of the hundreds of federal employees or civil servants who are involved in some way with peripheral or direct activities of the federal fisheries jurisdiction less than two dozen of them have any practical common sense, knowledge, or background based on actual experience in the fishing industry. If that is true, it is an appalling situation.

At some time when the Minister of State (Fisheries) has an opportunity, I would like to see him give us a breakdown of how many of his associates and employees or civil servants do have any hard, practical background in the fishing industry similar, for example, to that of the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse), who was a successful fishing captain in his earlier days.

I will conclude now by simply giving one example of the ridiculous state to which the fishermen in my area are reduced as a result of the present situation. In a small area called Pictou Landing in my constituency there is a yacht club called the Royal William Yacht Club, which at the present time is the only place fishermen in that area can moor their boats or use facilities which they otherwise would have had, since construction of a wharf which was scheduled to be built was curtailed because of the particular cancellation implicit in the small boats and harbours program reduction.

This is a yacht club used by people for recreational purposes. Out of a spirit of neighbourliness and a desire to help, the club turned over its facilities to fishermen simply because a badly needed wharf, one which has been demonstrably needed for many years, the original having been demolished by the department in anticipation of building another one, cannot now be built. Some people wrote to me recently stating that they were glad to help, but asked whether something could be done to give the yacht club some compensation for allowing the fishermen to use its facilities.

The previous speaker spoke about Tories being like salmon. I think salmon are referred to in many quarters as the noblest of all fish, and I would like to say to the hon. member that, on the basis of my experience so far, I should like to draw another simile by saying that the present government, and the department in many cases, have exhibited the tendencies of another marine creature, and that is the octopus. An octopus has many tentacles, a great talent for obscuring issues by issuing great clouds of what is known as ink, and can change colours when desired. I think we have seen a great deal of that recently from this government in its administration.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!