

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

three base years, 1973-74, 1974-75 and 1975-76. They are for the maritimes as a group.

• (1610)

In 1973-74 we got \$3.2 million. In 1974-75 the amount went up to \$10.2 million. Then, under the general restraint program of last year, it went down to \$7 million. Those figures are for the maritimes generally. In Nova Scotia, in 1973-74, the amount was \$1.6 million. In 1974-75 it was \$5.8 million, and in 1975-76 it went down to \$4.6 million. The amount was reduced in 1975-76. We all know what an absolute reduction means in this kind of inflation. Hon. members can imagine the adverse affect there is when in these times of inflation figures are reduced. We are not getting as much as our dollar used to buy, so there is almost a double-whammy effect. I put figures for Nova Scotia on the record to segregate it from the maritime region because of the value of fish to Nova Scotia, let alone to Atlantic Canada as a whole—and Atlantic Canada far outranks B.C.

The only province which had an increased allotment in those three base years was Quebec. In 1973-74, the amount for Quebec was \$800,000. In 1974-75 it was \$4.3 million, and when every other province or region got less in 1975-76 because of restraint, Quebec's allotment increased to \$10 million. In Quebec there was a steady rise and a graphic jump. The amount was doubled from the last base year.

I would like to know what the minister says about this. He will have a chance in committee. Perhaps the amounts increased so significantly because there were not many facilities in Quebec before these three base years. I do not know, but in terms of the landed value of fish, which is supposed to determine the allocation of funds, I hope the minister will give us some explanation with regard to Nova Scotia and the maritimes where the landed value has gone up. In those areas the allocation of funds for wharf facilities went down, and the only area in which the allocation went up consistently for those three base years was the province of Quebec. I want to see how that relates to an increase or decrease in the landed value of fish so that I can get some idea of the consistency or equity in this important policy of allocation of funds.

I admit that in any program there has to be flexibility, reflecting the definite and distinct regions of this land. Certain regions demand almost different policies from time to time. The Bay of Fundy, with its peculiar hard shoreline and high tides, is one of the most expensive places at which to maintain any wharf facility. There is no protection from either the sea or the rise and fall of the tides. Even B.C. does not have the tides we have. Thus, different policies will have to apply under an over-all umbrella. However, to be flexible you have to be fair or you might build up alienation.

The allocation of funds must be dependent upon rationalization, but we must make sure that rationalization does not become elimination, and we must make sure the flexibility in a program is also fair so that there is an opportunity for some of the most independent people in the world to maintain the existence they choose to maintain. That existence gives them a

[Mr. Nowlan.]

certain amount of internal freedom which, frankly, has my respect. It is a standard of independence which I think many Canadians might like to have.

I was glad to participate in this part of the debate on Bill C-7. I am looking forward to this bill getting into committee and hearing the minister explain some of the matters I have mentioned. Because the value of other things has gone up, perhaps the value of the inshore fishery in my area is not as high as it once was. In my old constituency of Digby-Annapolis-Kings which I had the privilege to represent, the county of Digby was one of the most prolific areas for fish in Nova Scotia, and there are still very meaningful communities there which depend upon fishing.

Extending our shoreline to the 200-mile limit helps deep sea trawlers, but with proper administration of wharf facilities and proper policies from the Department of Fisheries we could see a restoration of the inshore fishery. It may not be as big as the offshore fishery, but there is a place for it. It would be like an ostrich putting its head in the sand, if a renewable resource which contributes vitally to the economy of many small areas was forgotten. It would be unfortunate if we did not have the capacity to help those areas. I pray that we will have the capacity to develop constructive policies which will maintain them.

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity to participate in this debate, not that I am a man of loquacity or one who hastens to get a chance to talk, but I have never noticed that too much attention has been paid in this chamber or, indeed, in the country to the people engaged in the fishing industry. I therefore think it is worthwhile that we are concentrating, through Bill C-7, on the problems of a group of people who in the last decade or two have had extremely difficult situations with which to cope.

Problems have been brought on because of actions or non-actions of our government, because of intrusions as a result of the activities of other countries, and at times, it would appear, from the very forces of nature itself. This group of people, the fishermen of Canada, have had a very difficult time in the last 15 or 20 years. The hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan) has spoken about a number of matters and I did not find anything in what he said with which I disagree. He used the expression "benign neglect", and as I move about the coast of my province—I do not have to travel very far to get to the coast of Prince Edward Island; it is not an enormous journey—I see the very thing to which my hon. friend has referred, a benign neglect. However, in the case of P.E.I., as I hope I can demonstrate in a few minutes, the neglect has been something more than benign. It has been a planned neglect, and it has brought about a very regrettable situation which stems from an agreement between the provincial government and the dominion government.

Although the hon. member for Annapolis Valley boasted a bit about his province, he was quite right in referring to the seriousness of the loss of a community sense of identity. We have overorganized, integrated our schools and brought about