

**An hon. Member:** On fishermen?

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Madam Speaker, I hear some hon. members expressing surprise that I should be speaking on this motion, but after all someone should speak for the third, fourth and fifth parties in this House and no one in this House can challenge my right to do so.

The hon. member who has just taken his seat chided the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) for what he regarded as a mistake in geography, so I think it is only proper for me to pick him up on something that he said. He said that one of the things that has to be done for the fishing industry is to protect our resource, to protect the sea. May I remind him that we must also protect our inland lakes and rivers? That gets me into this debate in another way because in the Winnipeg area we have the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation which has some problems to which I hope the government is giving attention.

Despite the way in which the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Breau) skirted the issue in the motion and seemed to express complete satisfaction with the present arrangement, it certainly was my understanding during the election campaign that the Liberals in the Atlantic provinces, like the Conservatives, were promising a separate department of fisheries. I understand that our candidates in that area were doing likewise. By bringing to this debate the approval of the third party and the fourth party, and the independent member for Moncton (Mr. Jones), I am making it unanimous.

I notice that some of the British Columbia members are wanting to get into this debate so I shall take only a few moments. I want to support the motion and I suspect that, even though it appears that it is due for the usual treatment in that the motion is going to be talked out, the government does not mind the subject being discussed, and aired in this House. Indeed, despite all the defence which may be put up respecting the fisheries activities of the federal government being under the Department of the Environment, everyone must realize that it is awkward to have a statute which says that the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Sauvé) is the minister of fisheries for Canada, and to have an order in council which says that the hon. member for Westmorland-Kent (Mr. LeBlanc) is Minister of State with responsibilities for administering the various acts of parliament relating to fisheries.

● (1640)

In one way or another this mix-up ought to be straightened out. I think it would be better for the activities which come under the Department of the Environment, and better for those which relate to fisheries, if this confusion could be resolved. It seems to me that the way the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) suggests is the logical way to go about it, and I hope the government will give this matter consideration, no matter what the fate of this afternoon's motion may be.

I enjoyed my hon. friend's attempt across the way to chide my friends to my right, who are usually on an economy kick, for wanting to establish what he called a

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new agency. I do not think it is fair to label a request for a department of fisheries a request for a new agency. After all, a fisheries branch or department is as old as Canada itself.

I commend the hon. member for St. John's East for raising this matter this afternoon. I can see that his motion will suffer the usual fate. Come five o'clock, we shall still be dealing with it. Nevertheless, I hope the government will give the matter consideration. Perhaps this is already taking place.

**Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta):** Madam Speaker, I do not intend to speak long on this motion, as others from other parts of Canada also wish to speak on it. Let me say that I support it. There are in my riding several harbours, among which are Steveston Harbour, one of the finest fishing harbours in British Columbia, Ladner Harbour, and Gunderson Slough. In addition, there is resident in my riding Mr. Homer Stevens, chief of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union. He ran against me in the last election but came in last; but that does not mean that he does not know how to run a fisheries union, because he is well respected by his men and has a great knowledge of the fishery.

I support the hon. member's motion and will not repeat what he said because he spoke so well. What concerns me is a statement made by my hon. friend of the Liberal party regarding government involvement in fisheries. I sometimes wonder—perhaps this question should be on the order paper—how many fishermen are involved in the work of the department of fisheries. I say this because when Roberts Bank was built in my area, it was built in one of the finest crabbing areas of British Columbia. I talked to fishermen about it and to government people. The fishermen said that they had talked to Department of the Environment people, to fisheries people, to Department of Public Works people and others, and had been assured that the superport would not kill off the crab in those waters. According to the experts, engineering feasibility studies had been done, and everyone was certain the crab would not be killed. It is sad to report that now you no longer find crab around Roberts Bank superport, especially on the southern side, because the tides did not do what department of fisheries experts had predicted.

The fishermen of my riding have often said that nobody listens to them, and that is why this motion is so important for the fishermen of this country. We need a separate department of fisheries with a minister who is not responsible to other ministers and who can stand on his own two feet and tell other ministers what needs to be done. For these reasons I support the motion moved by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), and I will now sit down to allow other members to participate in this debate.

**Mr. Len Marchand (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, at the outset let me say to colleagues who have spoken that I will bring their representations to the attention of the Minister of State (Fisheries) (Mr. LeBlanc). Hon. members have raised valid points which merit examination.

The question which the hon. member has raised in his motion is essentially one of concept and of perspective, so