

*Adjournment Debate*

let alone getting enough return on that day's work to pay for the loan on that boat from the Fisheries Loan Board or the local bank.

That is my subject, Madam Speaker. As you know, that has been my subject for some time in this House and I am sure it will come as no surprise to you that it will continue to be my subject until we get the attention of this government.

It is true, and I would be the first one to acknowledge this—indeed I thank the minister publicly—that after many months of preaching to the minister and his colleagues, the government did respond with a program which will somewhat help the people in the so-called offshore communities, the fishermen, the plant workers and the industrial base in communities such as Gaultois and Grand Bank.

At the time I asked that question four months ago and up until now the minister has not responded to the desperate plea of those people in those communities. That is a subject that I addressed earlier today in this House. I asked the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans a question on this subject only yesterday.

• (1805)

The question is simple, and the solution is very simple, too. The question is: What are you going to do to help those people who through no fault of their own have no income? Others have depleted the stocks. The foreign overfishing has depleted the stocks. The French fishing in 3PS have depleted the stocks.

Those people cannot catch the fish twice. They cannot catch the fish that has already been caught by someone else.

They are caught in that period. Should they abandon their communities, their way of life, their loved ones, their neighbours, their homes, their property and pack their suitcases and go to Fort McMurray or Cambridge, Ontario, or Toronto? No, that is not the solution.

The solution is right under our noses. The solution is to help these people bridge the gap financially from prosperous times, which they have known until a year or so ago, to more prosperous times. The government does tell us it is going to have the stocks rebuilt in three, four

or five years' time. So let us keep those people there in a community where they can do what they know best, where their skills are related to the fishery.

In order to do that what we need, and what we do not yet have from this government, is a fisheries aid package to help the people in Piccadilly, Lourdes and the other places on the Port au Port Peninsula, on the southwest coast, in Fortune Bay, in Placentia Bay. These are people who are hurting today, whose pain and suffering could be eased if the minister with a stroke of a pen would exercise a bit of humanity instead of giving me those cheap partisan answers that he has been giving in the last day or two in particular. That is beneath him.

He would be equal to the task if tomorrow he rose in this House and said: "I recognize the plight of those people and I am prepared on behalf of the Government of Canada to do something about it". Let him be a man. Let him come to the aid of those people now while there is still time.

**Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to expand upon the reply given the hon. member by the Minister for International Trade on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The government is fully aware of conditions throughout the Atlantic fishery. The 1989-90 winter fishery in NAFO division 3PS off the south coast of Newfoundland has experienced a catch failure. Landings data reveal that catches are only 50 per cent of the 1985-87 average for the area. Officials of the Departments of Fisheries and Oceans and Employment and Immigration are currently developing appropriate measures to assist the area plant workers in fisheries affected by the catch failures.

The federal government is deeply committed to the people of Atlantic Canada. The government is concerned both about the short term and long term conditions affecting the fishing industry. In most Atlantic fisheries, far more people depend on fishing activity than can earn a reasonable living from it. We recognize that there is a need to diversify local economies beyond the fishing industry and have evaluated other adjustment measures that will help produce excess capacity and