

*Government Organization*

On the west coast, the fishery is fairly well developed. It has set patterns. However, a change must take place on the east coast. If not done in a careful manner, this change could destroy existing living patterns which have gone on for centuries and create much disruption in lifestyles.

The trend has changed in Newfoundland over the past few years. I submit the fishermen's union was a major influence. The federal Department of Fisheries recognized that development of the fisheries has to take place while considering the communities from which the fishery takes place. The Tories do not seem to be sensitive to these needs. They would prefer development to follow the needs of the big fish companies, not those of the fishermen in the rural communities.

● (1620)

It is important to develop the fishery in a way compatible with traditional patterns of life. It is important that change should not come about too fast. We should recognize that most of the fishermen on the east coast are part-time fishermen. Part of their income, perhaps the major part, comes from fishing during the summer, but during the winter they cut wood or engage in some other part-time job. There are few full-time fishermen in the Newfoundland context and due regard must be paid to this situation.

If the department concentrates on full-time fishermen, the social impact will be profound, particularly on young people about to enter the industry. Traditionally, sons begin work in the fishery with the help of their fathers. Many part-time fishermen in my riding have found it difficult to introduce their sons to the fishery. I trust the department will recognize the problem and come forward with proposals for suitable compensation during periods of dislocation.

In recent years licensing arrangements have begun to change traditional patterns in the fishing industry. We recognize the need for a forward-looking, coherent policy for the development of the fishery, but while restricted entry to the industry might be desirable in the long term, such a move toward an elite corps of fishermen would cause tremendous dislocation in the short term and could give rise to a great deal of unemployment and hardship affecting individual fishermen in coastal communities. It is most important to consider the realities which exist in these communities when making overall fisheries policy, and I am confident the new department will do this.

The licence freezes of the past few years have caused hardship. I recognize there is bound to be dislocation, but we must surely minimize the extent of that dislocation. Certain licences have been frozen for some time; I have in mind, especially, those required for lobster and certain species of groundfish. The part-time fishermen, who constitute a majority in the Atlantic region, have been hit hard, new entrants into the fishery have been hit hard, and the future of young people has become uncertain. Should they stay in their communities with the expectation that they can enter the fishery, or should they go to Alberta or Toronto, for instance, to seek jobs there?

These are serious questions and they must be dealt with; I trust the minister will consider them very carefully.

The new department, through its licensing policy, could have a tremendous impact on local conditions along the east coast. It could also have an important impact on the size of fish stocks. It is necessary to balance the social cost to communities against the benefits of conservation. By varying the number of fishermen engaged in the industry we could change the recovery rate among fish stocks. If fishing were completely cut out for one year, fish stocks would probably recover in one year, but what would be the effect upon thousands of fishermen? It seems to me that if we allowed unlimited entry to the fisheries, stocks would continue to decline; so the need for some sort of balance must be recognized, always bearing in mind the needs of the rural communities.

I should like to turn my attention for a few moments to the seal fishery and its relationship to the fishing industry in general. What impact do the seal herds have on fish stocks? It is estimated there are about 1.3 million seals in the herd along the east coast. Each seal eats about 15 pounds of fish a day on the average. I have done the arithmetic and this works out to approximately 3.2 million metric tons of fish a year consumed by the seal herd off the east coast. Looking at the total fish landings on the east coast last year we see they amounted to less than a million metric tons, so seals are right now consuming three times as much fish as Canadian fishermen are catching off the east coast.

The figures I have given are, of course, approximate because it is impossible to ascertain just how much fish seals eat. Nevertheless, the information is very valuable in terms of the annual irrational debate and also because of the fact that the minister seems in part to have given in to the protesters. This year the quota for the seal hunt has been set at a level which would see a small increase in the seal population, thereby endangering fish stocks even more. So another thing the department should seriously consider is whether in the light of the continuing controversy over the seal hunt it is the fishermen or the seals which will get the fish off the east coast. If the seal stocks increase, as the protesters would wish, many fishermen will be unable to make a living because the fish just won't be there. This is a decision which the new department will have to approach with some care. I trust the minister will give this matter his consideration. His record thus far has been good and I trust it will continue.

I turn, now, to part II of the bill. Under these provisions there is a proposal to change the name of the Fisheries Research Board to the Fisheries and Oceans Research Advisory Council. I will not comment on the board itself or the work it has done, but in my view the new reorganizing bill has one substantial flaw. In setting up the council the proposal totally neglects representation by fishermen themselves or by their organizations. Clause 4 of part II of Bill C-35 provides:

4. (1) The *Council* shall consist of a chairman and not more than 24 other members.

(2) A majority of the members of the *Council* shall be scientists.