

Supply—Labour

registration figures in which the fishermen were not included. I do not know yet what that means, and I do not think the minister knew, nor do I think he could explain today. Then the minister went on:

Everyone seeking work is included in these dominion bureau of statistics figures, and the qualification period for unemployment insurance also applies to fishermen.

Mr. Pickersgill: In other words the government has ceased—

Mr. Speaker: I hope the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate is not going to enter into a debate on this matter.

Of course I did then, as I always do, Mr. Chairman, comply with the direction of the Chair. Then I continued:

No, I simply want to clarify the minister's answer. The question I was going to ask the minister—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

No doubt the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi was amongst those who said "Sit down", showing the respect that some hon. members have for the rights of free speech in this chamber.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. member a supplementary question?

Mr. Pickersgill: I have a supplementary question, and it is this. Did I understand the minister to say consideration is no longer being given to a reduction in the number of stamps required by fishermen for unemployment insurance?

Mr. Starr: I said, sir, no consideration is being given to reducing the 15 stamps that are required for seasonal benefits at the moment, and that includes everyone.

On January 16 the Prime Minister said the matter was still being considered. On January 20 the Minister of Labour said no consideration was being given to it. I wanted to ask the Minister of Labour if he had been in his place in the chamber, as he ought to have been when asking for \$2½ million more to administer the unemployment insurance commission, instead of leaving it to the Minister of Finance who seems to be equally uninformed about all the estimates he is bringing before us, to tell us precisely what happened between January 16, when the Prime Minister said the matter was still being considered, and January 20 when the Minister of Labour said no consideration was being given to the matter at all.

If the Minister of Finance cannot reply to that question perhaps the minister from Newfoundland, who is a member of the cabinet, though his interventions on behalf of Newfoundland in this chamber have not been very frequent since he was returned to this parliament, would care to tell us what happened between January 16 and 20. What consideration did the government give, as the Prime Minister promised, or was this just another of those promises? I think we are

entitled to know what happened between January 16, when the Prime Minister said this matter was being considered, and January 20 when the Minister of Labour said that no consideration was being given to the matter.

Perhaps the minister would like to tell us right away what it was. Perhaps the minister would like to tell us why there was no consideration when over \$40 million was voted for the grain growers, which we supported and which we in this party voted for, those who represent fishing ridings as well as everyone else; let there be no mistake that we voted for it, because we realized that there was a difficult situation in the prairie provinces. We voted for it even though we thought it was a bad way to do it, because we thought something needed to be done. But here in the fisheries was a situation where something needed to be done even more urgently, where the need was far greater; but all we get from the Minister of Labour is the statement that no consideration is being given. I repeat, no consideration is being given.

I think before we are asked to vote another \$2½ million, because of the shocking estimating which has been done by someone, either by the Department of Labour or the minister, we ought to know what is being done in this connection. They reduced this item in the main estimates by nearly \$1 million in order perhaps to show that what they were asking for was not as great as they knew they would need. Now they come and ask for \$2½ million more, which is a fine example of careful and accurate estimating such as has been very characteristic of the Minister of Finance.

But I do not want to be diverted from my main point, which is this. I would like the Minister of Finance or the minister from Newfoundland to tell us what consideration was given to these proposals which the Prime Minister promised would be considered, and what reason the government had for rejecting them and saying that the fishermen, who had a failure of their crop which drove about half of them on to relief, were not deserving of any consideration. Presumably the government decided they were not suffering, and so the Prime Minister's promise of a year ago did not apply to them. I would like to tell the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the minister from Newfoundland that the fishermen of that province are not going to forget this neglect.

The Deputy Chairman: Shall item 752 carry?

Mr. Pickersgill: Is not the minister going to answer?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, my hon. friend knows perfectly well that we