

*The Address—Mr. Carter*

cannot explain Newfoundland has the highest birth rate in Canada and the lowest death rate. So, throwing all these considerations together, Mr. Speaker, what do we have? We have in Newfoundland today a very serious economic situation, one which we are desperately trying to solve and are looking to the Canadian government for help in solving.

• (4:50 p.m.)

The fact that, historically, Newfoundlanders have turned their eyes to the sea rather than on land resources may explain the imbalance of our trade. From the bountiful depths of the sea surrounding our province the major part of our subsistence is derived, and therein lies one of our major problems. At best it is a subsistence and no more.

We have a college of fisheries in Newfoundland, and I ask the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) to consider my request to provide a deep sea dragger for our fishing college. In this way our Newfoundlanders who are learning to become expert fishermen will have a chance to gain some actual experience in their trade. I am calling this matter to the government's attention and, especially, to the attention of the Minister of Fisheries who, I am sure, will appreciate the need for such a dragger. I repeat, I ask the government to provide a deep sea dragger for this fisheries college in Newfoundland. I have no hesitation in bringing forward my recommendation since I am aware that \$100 million a year is being spent on external aid. I would consider the government's action, if it should equip our fisheries college with a dragger, as a little bit of internal aid which is as important to this nation, and to Newfoundland, as external aid is to other nations.

I take issue with the hon. member for Burin-Burgeo (Mr. Jamieson), Newfoundland's cabinet representative, for remarks he made in the house on Friday last concerning the federal government's decision to discontinue the salt rebate. We are aware of the hon. member's delicate position as the member for Burin-Burgeo and as a minister of the crown. Since he was talking about matters pertaining to our province, I should have expected him at least to take a position sympathetic to the needs of our province.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Carter:** I am sure the minister didn't intend to mislead this house deliberately. Nevertheless, in his usually eloquent way, he succeeded in misrepresenting completely the

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views of hon. members representing Newfoundland who sit on this side of the house.

At no time did we take the position that the salt rebate ought to continue. What we did say, and I repeat this, is that the salt rebate should be allowed to continue until the government is in a position to decide upon a substitute program. We find it difficult to understand why the government would discontinue the salt rebate, which is of vital importance to Newfoundland fishermen, in the middle of the fishing season when the salt fishermen were in the process of prosecuting the Labrador fishery. At this crucial moment the government, with my hon. friend's consent, decided to discontinue this important salt rebate program. That is shameful, and I am disappointed in my friend and colleague from Newfoundland for taking the position he took in this house on Friday in defending the government's position.

God knows, Mr. Speaker, the life of a fisherman is hard. It is a life demanding the utmost of those who engage in it. Newfoundlanders and their counterparts in other Atlantic provinces are not afraid of hardship. Our people have suffered hardships and borne the fury of wind and weather for generations. We are bred to it and we have not changed. Our Atlantic coast fishermen, including our Newfoundland fishermen, are accustomed to hard times, to hardships and to braving the elements. Our people have not changed, and I suspect they will never change. Our fishermen, not unlike their counterparts in other industries, want to be employed, want to fish. At the same time they want to be assured of a market for their fish, as well as a decent price for their fish.

Today our fisheries are in deep trouble, Mr. Speaker. This is another area where the government announces paper programs which do not go into effect or, if they do, make the situation worse than it was before. The fishing industry is basic to the economy of the Atlantic provinces. I might ask, what has happened to our fishing industry? I think most hon. members know the answer.

Prices have dropped and foreign competition is eating into our traditional markets for salt and frozen fish. As a result of technological advances, eastern European countries have placed in our waters floating fish factories with which our fishermen are expected to compete on equal terms. Surely, if the government means business, it is time for it to take action on a massive scale to maintain the competitive capacity of the Canadian fishing