

Supply—Fisheries and Forestry

progressive rationalization of the industry, basically one which will reduce costs; a policy which must recognize, however, the human values involved, the rights of people, the attachment they have to their homes in many, and often remote, areas of the country. It is not easy to find long term solutions which do not influence the lives of people and will not uproot them and move them. We have to face this fact. We have begun to face it in Canada, and particularly in Newfoundland on a relatively small scale. The centralization program, which several hon. members have mentioned, is resulting in the movement of people, which affects their social values. We will have to continue this resettlement plan. I hope we can have a more effective and bigger program.

I made a few rough calculations about the extent of taxpayer support—it is not just government support; it is money of the people of Canada—for that part of Canada which supports groundfish industry, namely the Atlantic area. A great deal of assistance is now going to that area, without this additional band aid treatment in respect of which some hon. members have asked that an announcement be made in a matter of days or weeks. This support is of the order of \$40 on every \$100 of production. This is a great deal of support. There is no question of nothing being done, because a great deal is being done. Some people might say that the money has been mis-spent, but it is very substantial support.

Research in fisheries amounts to 5 per cent at least of the gross value of the catch. This is the largest of any industry in Canada. There can be no doubt that research expenditure for the fishing industry has been very substantial in dollar terms, and I think in quality. So there can be no excuse asked for or given in that regard. With regard to general support, the budget of the department is \$50 million. The total value of the fishery in Canada is \$300 million. This is a great deal of money relative to the total value of the fishery, and certainly a proportionate share is going to those parts of the country which are having a problem with the ground fishery, particularly the Atlantic area.

We have to do several things. I am personally attracted to the idea of a solution for the salt fishery somewhat similar to that proposed for the fresh water fishery. I think that unless other and better propositions are advanced very shortly we will have to arrange for the more orderly and effective single-desk marketing of our salt fish production. I think this

[Mr. Davis.]

would certainly improve quality and would slowly, progressively centralize the industry as well. This would lead to the movement of people to fewer centres, where there could be more efficient collection and where fish in the round could be handled with centralized efficiency.

With regard to processing, we have to produce quality salt fish and regain our position in the world as a supplier of salt fish. We can do that when we come to the fresh and frozen commodity, which has been the mainstay of the industry. We are concerned with an industry which surely in some measure at least should remain in the hands of private ownership. It is certainly an industry in which the individual fisherman still has a very substantial role.

• (6:00 p.m.)

This is a question which hon. members on all sides of the house should really ask themselves: How far can a government assist an industry before the taxpayers who are supplying the money begin to demand remarkable changes in respect of the way that industry is run? We are all asking ourselves that question, and no doubt some hard decisions will have to be made.

I received a telegram, which had been referred to several times during the course of the debate today, which in effect said that the industry may shortly have to tie up many of its vessels. I was wondering where the money was going to come from to enable the fresh and frozen industry to send its vessels to sea in January or February of next year, and to make them productive again. As I said before, we have had two special programs totalling \$8 million brought in during 1968. At this moment we do not have money set aside in the estimates or in the budget of the federal Department of Fisheries for additional support of this kind. It may be necessary to give some interim support, but I thought that the frank thing to do was to tell the industry that so far as I knew, and so far as I could tell them with certainty, no money at this moment is earmarked for payment to them prior to March 31, 1969. That is the situation as of this moment.

This does not prevent the government from developing two policies, one short term and one long term, communicating them to the industry, discussing them, and announcing them in full measure in the next month or two. However this is a frank statement of the situation in which we find ourselves today. I