

Supply—Fisheries

fishermen, I hope the minister will reassure us, when he speaks, that he intended no such thing.

I should now like to say a word in commendation of the government regarding two things it has done. First, the portable bait freezers have been very successful, and I am very glad to know that one is going to be placed in my constituency this year, but I could inform the minister of six or seven other places in my constituency which have a need for these freezers which is almost as great, if not as great, as the need of the community that is receiving one. I understand these portable bait freezers cost in the neighbourhood of only \$15,000 to \$20,000 each.

Mr. Carter: No, \$5,000 to \$6,000.

Mr. Pickersgill: My friend the hon. member for Burin-Burgeo informs me they cost much less than I understood. He says they cost \$5,000 to \$6,000. It seems to me that, in view of the small expenditure of money required to make the fisheries so much more efficient, we ought to have a blitz and situate them, all in one year, in every settlement where they are required. I do not suggest they be placed at every place along the coast, because there are some communities where only two or three fishermen operate. However, these freezers are portable and, if a mistake is made in placing one, that mistake is not irrevocable; the unit can be moved to another community. Why does the government not spend \$250,000, if it is even that much, and put these fishermen in a position to fish with much greater efficiency, and thereby increase their income?

I should also at this time like to say a word regarding community stages, which have already proven to be very successful. I admit they are not portable, and it is very important that they be placed in the proper areas.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. gentleman but his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Is there unanimous consent in this committee to allow the hon. gentleman to carry on?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Pickersgill: I appreciate that very much because I think in five or six minutes I shall be able to say everything I wanted to say of a general nature, and the body of my remarks will then appear on the record in one place instead of in bits and pieces.

Regarding community stages, I merely intended to say that where they had been

well located—most of them have been so placed, and some have been exceptionally well located—they have increased the productivity and profitability of the fisheries of the community out of all recognition. I am sure that within a relatively few years the increased returns to the exchequer alone, to say nothing of the returns to the economy as a whole, will pay for them.

Again I say that I do not know why we do not do this job thoroughly rather than just building two or three, or six or seven stages per year. I feel that they should be placed immediately everywhere they are needed to stabilize the fisheries and thereby place the fishermen in a position to make a better living, under more satisfactory conditions and, incidentally, to make it possible to produce a better product. These community stages, with a reasonable water supply, with greater sanitation and so on, do result in the production of a better product than is produced by the use of the old stages of individual fishermen.

I must say that I was rather disappointed when I asked the minister a couple of weeks ago if the government was contemplating any legislation for the fisheries comparable to the legislation introduced by his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, and I refer to the rural rehabilitation legislation. The rural rehabilitation legislation is, of course, designed for the improvement of the rural economy in those areas which need rehabilitation. It is certainly true that, as far as the east coast fisheries are concerned, there is just as much need for community rehabilitation, for the improvement of fishermen's gear, boats and other implements of production, as there is in any rural area of this country. I urge the minister and the government to seek to do something comparable in respect to our fisheries. I admit that such a program would be carried out on a long term basis and would have very little immediate effect. That is of course true of the rural rehabilitation program. However, this is a patrimony that we ought to seek to preserve.

It is very extraordinary that we have, off the coast of Newfoundland and the east coast of Canada, the greatest fishery in the world; a fishery that has been exploited for 500 years by the Portuguese, the French and the English, and which is being exploited today, not merely by the historic fishing nations, but by the Russians and the Germans, all whom have to cross the Atlantic, making voyages from 3,000 to 4,000 miles, and who feel there is an economic advantage in doing so. Here we are right at the front doorstep of this great fishery and yet the fishery is perhaps the most depressed of our industries. Surely that