

Fisheries Ministry

program which we have been awaiting for so long? Such a deputy minister could then do something about the other problems the Minister of State (Mr. LeBlanc) cannot find time for except on an over-all basis.

The Minister of State for Fisheries has been doing an excellent job since taking over this portfolio, and I suggest he deserves to have a deputy minister of that department in order to make sure that all the programs referred to by the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador are being carried out. In the Department of National Health and Welfare there is a deputy minister for health and a deputy minister for welfare.

Mr. McGrath: And they are not assistant deputy ministers.

Mr. Marshall: They are not assistant deputy ministers, as my colleague reminds me. Would it not be just as important to have a deputy minister of fisheries in order to focus attention on the importance of fisheries? We should have a deputy minister with the title and everything that goes with it.

While speaking of marketing, it is difficult for me to reconcile that our catches of fish have been decreasing and our exports have been dropping with the increase in our imports. In 1973 we exported \$499 million in fish from Canada and in 1974 this value dropped to \$437 million. The fish marketing board has reported that we are building up fish inventories, but we still imported \$120 million worth of fish last year. I suggest that we are buying our own fish back.

The foreign druggers are coming in and taking our fish back for processing and then selling it back to us. In 1973 we imported \$111 million worth of fish, in 1974 this increased to \$120 million, and this has taken place at a time when our exports dropped from \$499 million worth to \$437 million. So it is very important that the issue of marketing be attached as one of the duties of a deputy minister of fisheries.

The other serious problem I should like to refer to today relates to this massive income support program for fishermen that was promised back in 1974. On July 26, 1974, the minister of fisheries for Newfoundland wrote a letter to the then Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Jack Davis, pointing out his feelings about the income support program for fishermen that was to be established. We have heard periodically that it will be forthcoming in a few weeks, but here we are in 1975 without this program. Fishermen are giving up the fishing industry because they cannot afford to replace their gear, yet we still do not have a support program.

Let me remind those hon. members opposite who were saying during the last election campaign that, were it not for the Conservative party forcing an election, we in Canada would have an income support program for fishermen, that it is now 1975 and we still do not have such a program. I am now wondering with the proposed restraints that are to take place whether we will see an income support program for fishermen in the near future.

This is an important matter and is an element in the proposal for a unilateral 200 mile limit. Even though the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador and I represent sister ridings, I am sure he knows that the

[Mr. Marshall.]

stories he hears from his fishermen are different than the stories I am getting from mine.

It is worth while to point out that while Canada is moving toward negotiating a 200 mile limit, or perhaps a continental shelf limit, four countries which have been distressed, disturbed, and discouraged by the slow progress made at the international Law of the Sea Conference have already moved toward their own 200 mile limits. Those countries are Norway, Mexico, little Iceland, and recently the United States.

The hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) was with me in Washington when we discussed with a fisheries committee there a bill they proposed for submission to the House of Representatives proclaiming a unilateral 200 mile limit. If I may, I would like to quote one or two of the reasons they give in respect of this bill. They are first:

That international negotiations have so far proved incapable of obtaining timely agreement on the protection and conservation of threatened species of fish and marine life;

That there is further danger of irreversible depletion before efforts to achieve an international agreement on jurisdiction over coastal and anadromous fisheries result in an operative agreement; and

That it is therefore necessary for the United States to take interim action to protect and conserve overfished stocks and to protect our domestic fishing industry.

If the United States can see fit to declare unilaterally a 200 mile limit for the reasons outlined here, surely Canada should focus the attention of all nations at the Law of the Sea Conference on the fact that we mean to take action. We can bring attention to the fact that we are not going to hurt anybody by such a declaration in respect of fisheries alone, and following that we can negotiate in respect of the other resources.

In order to give some of my other colleagues a chance to speak on this very important bill I just want to refer to one other matter, and that is the elimination of the \$10 million allocated for small craft harbours. This will be of great harm to the fishermen who need those bases to take advantage of the fish stocks off our shores that are not being taken by foreign druggers. It is extremely important that the government immediately reallocate this \$10 million in order to provide those bases for the fishermen so that they can at least get the fish the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador says they are now throwing back.

I want to commend my colleague again for presenting this bill. I am sure the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate will be speaking on it, so I want to leave enough time for a vote in order that we might get agreement from everybody in the House.

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): I appreciate being recognized, Madam Speaker, because otherwise this might have turned into an international Newfoundland day.

The hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has, in my opinion, today served two purposes. First, by bringing forward this bill he has proved that action has indeed been taken by the government on the issue of giving greater prominence to the role of fisheries in our country. The string of successes already attributed to the Minister of State for Fisheries (Mr. LeBlanc) is really quite impressive, and I was pleased to hear the hon. gentleman oppo-