

If I left anyone out who is helping to further your cause I apologize, but the good news is, to anyone out there who wishes to see hard times and poverty for the fishermen and people of South West Nova, rejoice, it's well on its way.

Well I'd better go. I think I hear the wolves at the door. I'll keep you up to date on any new disasters or bankruptcies in the fishery and you keep up the good work on your end. You know I did hear the wolves at the door, my wheelhouse door, and they're wearing green suits.

Fisherman

Jamie Theriault

That explains exactly what is happening to the many thousands of people in communities throughout Scotia-Fundy, whether it is Lockeport or whether it is in Digby Neck or anywhere. This Minister of Fisheries will virtually erase the whole inshore fishery. The best will be gone unless he decides to start listening first to the fishermen, to the people who represent the fishermen and the fish plant workers, to the companies, to the premier and perhaps even to the minister from the province of Nova Scotia who must have some concerns at least about the lobster size that this government is going to allow without anything but political, diplomatic talk.

I can only say that this minister has done a great disservice to a natural resource that we have been given for the use of all people.

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to participate in a debate with my friends from Nova Scotia. The member for South West Nova looks charming today in black. It is appropriate that she is wearing it, because she has given us nothing but a litany of gloom and doom.

My colleague from Beaséjour has a very constructive resolution, in part.

**Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova):** What's he wearing?

**Mr. MacKay:** Where is he? Oh, there he is.

**Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova):** Talk about inanities and not the fish. Talk about the colour of my dress.

**Mr. MacKay:** I was hoping we would have some kind of constructive solution.

The member for South West Nova and my good friend from Cape Breton—The Sydneys have indicated that

### *Supply*

this government does not recognize there is a problem. That is not true. There have been problems in the Atlantic fishery for 100 years, and there have been 100 studies in the last century. This is not an isolated phenomenon. The fishery, as the hon. member knows, being a knowledgeable person, tends to be cyclical in nature. The fish are not here. The fish are not in the waters where they used to be.

Those of us who remember back when a former government commissioned Senator Kirby to study the east coast fishery will remember that Senator Kirby made some recommendations. I will read for the edification of the House one of Senator Kirby's recommendations. This is Liberal policy, and there is nothing wrong with it. This is what he suggested at the time:

The Atlantic fishery should be economically viable on an ongoing basis, where to be viable implies an ability to survive downturns with only a normal business failure rate and without government assistance.

I say to my friends opposite, was that Liberal policy that this fishery should survive normal business downturns without government assistance? It is not our policy. We try, whenever possible, to assist this sector. I would like to put on the record in a few moments some of the things that ACOA is doing to try to alleviate what is admittedly a situation that needs help.

Instead of getting some kind of assistance from the members opposite who are knowledgeable and concerned we get nothing but rhetoric. They cling to these rhetorical arguments like a drunk clings to a lamp post, more for support than for illumination. They do not put anything forward that seems to help the situation. We got nothing but a blanket condemnation of the minister of fisheries, who I think most members would be fair enough to realize is coping with a difficult situation in a conscientious way. He has a tough job.

I made a few notes about the statistics and I believe they are correct. I will refer to my friend opposite's constituency in South West Nova. In the Scotia-Fundy region, lobster landings have more than tripled and the landed value of lobster increased more than five times, from \$28 million to \$143 million. In the scallop industry, this year's catch looks like it will exceed last year's record levels and there are still three more months of fishing left.