

Mr. Speaker, this means that aside from the restructuring agreement with Newfoundland, and with Nova Scotia, if it materializes, aside from the \$138 million appropriated under Section 8 for acquiring shares in restructuring projects, the federal Government may set up a program to guarantee loans of \$100 million for fishery enterprises. I think that is a positive point and, in fact, the only truly positive aspect, as far as I can see, of Bill C-170.

One of the things that examining the Bill in Committee has done is to provide a forum for various fisheries interests to express their views, not only on this legislation and the restructuring plan, but also on the fisheries policy in general, especially in terms of fish stocks management as it is pursued at the present time, and this was brought up in connection with a paragraph of the agreement in principle concluded with the Province of Nova Scotia which referred to quotas for ocean perch in the Gulf. When people realized that the Government of Nova Scotia, in a bilateral agreement with the federal Government, insisted on privileged access or preferential treatment with respect to fish stock management and ocean perch quotas, they immediately saw two potential problems. There were two concerns.

First of all, there was a link between the government or governments that were owners of large companies, and fish stock management. In other words, the federal Government's role as objective arbitrator in awarding quotas was compromised. That was one concern. The second concern was that a dangerous precedent had been set, in that for the first time, without going through the usual consultation body, which in the case of groundfish happens to be the Atlantic Groundfish Advisory Committee (AGAC), a decision had been made on awarding quotas to a province or a party with interests in the fishing industry. I know that there was considerable unfavourable reaction to this, especially in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, and I have the impression that was the case in the other Atlantic provinces as well.

In any event, examining this Bill in committee gave people an opportunity to express their views on various items. For instance, a number of intervenors from New Brunswick appeared before the Committee to submit briefs, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them and thank them for having done so. I am referring to the Government of New Brunswick, a coalition of various fisheries interests in New Brunswick, the New Brunswick Fish Packers' Association and the Prince Edward Island Association, the Association professionnelle des pêcheurs du nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick, the Maritime Provinces Fishermen's Union. I don't think I left anyone out. These people expressed a number of concerns relating to federal policy as well as to the legislation itself. In fact, I also want to congratulate them because they were positive. They did not come here to fight against something, they did not come to speak out against restructuring and against the legislation. They came to tell the Government: These are our concerns and we would like some reassurance.

In his speech earlier today the Minister referred to a brief I sent him. Since at four o'clock in the morning I did not think a

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long speech would be welcome, I told the Minister I would be sending him a brief that would summarize the concerns of the people from New Brunswick who came to testify before the Committee. It was a matter of summarizing and interpreting in my own way what their concerns were and what the Government could do to deal with those concerns, to give them the assurance that what is good for Newfoundland and may be good for Nova Scotia is perhaps not so bad for the rest of the Maritime Provinces or for the fisheries industry in New Brunswick, for that matter.

● (1700)

I will sum up as briefly as possible the five points I raised in the memo I sent to the Minister. The first has to do with groundfish quotas in zone 4 RST or both zones, those which most closely follow the outline of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In my opinion, the Federal Government and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. De Bané) ought to make a statement very soon to tell the people that groundfish stocks in the Gulf will be reserved for the fleet of boats measuring 100 feet or less based in the Gulf. Besides boats from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec, that fleet includes as well boats from Newfoundland, the western coast of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and especially the Cape Breton area, because they too fish in the Gulf.

Because I come from New Brunswick and others are from Quebec or Prince Edward Island, some people tell us that we do not want any Nova Scotia and Newfoundland boats in the Gulf. That is not true, Mr. Speaker. I have no objection to boats from other provinces plying the Gulf, because the Gulf of St. Lawrence belongs to all Canadians. There has been talk about a dispute among fishing fleets. When talking about a fishing fleet, two things come to mind: the length and power of the boats. What people are saying is that, if boats belonging to fleets are powerful or long enough to go fishing offshore—meaning those boats which are big enough to store the fish caught over a period of one or sometimes two weeks—those boats can go offshore, but that most of the groundfish stocks in the Gulf, the 4 RST zone, should be reserved for boats measuring 100 feet or less based in the Gulf. There are 100-footers or smaller boats operating in the Gulf, and they come from the five eastern provinces, not only from New Brunswick, not only from Prince Edward Island, and not only from Quebec.

The philosophy expressed at the 1980 Memramcook symposium on Gulf groundfish must be maintained. I think that, in the distribution and management of quotas, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans must ensure that the policy of the Federal Government will continue to reflect that philosophy.

My second concern has to do with the agreement with Newfoundland, where reference is made to what is called secondary processing at the Burin plant and perhaps elsewhere. We want the assurance that Federal Government assistance—technical, monetary or whatever—efforts and resources will not be directed exclusively towards the new Newfoundland company when time comes to consider means