

Government Organization Act, 1970

conspiracy but I do not want to advocate that people break the law.

If the federal government is not prepared to listen to what members from the east coast have to say, we may have to start leading some movements to get action. We cannot bring the fishing boats on Parliament Hill, as the farmers did the tractors, but when the Prime Minister returns from the Soviet Union we will have plenty to say. We may have to amend some of the rules of the House of Commons.

I should like to continue for another five or six hours, Mr. Chairman, but I do not think I could make much impression on some of the members from western Canada.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Lundrigan: The freshwater fish industry was declining there and we worked hard for the westerners to get fresh fish marketing through the House. I hope western and central Canadians realize that we are not asking for a hand-out but just for some protection. Our fisheries resources, from shellfish to kelp to Irish moss, require proper policies and management in order to develop them to make a contribution to this nation.

We are frustrated because somebody has designed a model for our development based on Montreal. It has to be big, have tall buildings, great smokestacks and pollution and all the characteristics of the feasibility study, the input of data and the feed-out, giving all kinds of anticipated returns on the investment. It must have all these before we get the ear of the Prime Minister. We want the federal government to exercise more initiative with our marine resources so we can pay attention to the real needs and potential of our people.

Why can we not get a positive response? Are we going about it the wrong way, talking too much and not giving enough evidence? There is no sense our continuing and trying to be enthusiastic about contributing to the Canadian nation if the Canadian nation does not want our contribution. Before this bill goes through I should like the minister to expound on how we might get the initiatives for which we are asking.

● (9:10 p.m.)

I do not want him to tell us that they met this week with the French and had a brief discussion, that the Prime Minister ate caviar in the Soviet Union, that there is to be an international Law of the Sea conference in 1973, that ICNAF people are to meet tomorrow—that is not the answer—or that we will phase out the traditional rights of traditional fishing nations over the next decade in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. By the time they phase out those rights the Gulf will be a dead sea; there will be only salt in it. That is not the kind of initiative we want.

I hope my ramblings are reflecting my frustration as an elected member representing 75,000 people who are almost totally dependent on the fishing industry and whose unemployment rate reached 16.4 per cent in April. Is there any Canadian in the House of Commons or in

[Mr. Lundrigan.]

Canada today who cannot appreciate our frustrations? Would any representative from Quebec, and the people from Quebec, not be dissatisfied with a 16.4 per cent unemployment rate? What would happen to hon. members from Ontario, who are resigning day after day, if unemployment in their province reached 16.4 per cent and if a great resource industry such as fisheries were to disappear? It is disappearing from the east coast and from the House of Commons, so to speak.

I see that my colleague from Vegreville has just entered the chamber. What would happen if there were a 16.4 per cent unemployment rate in Alberta or in British Columbia, which have great resources? What would they do in those provinces if they suffered that kind of unemployment rate? Do you think that there would not be a revolution, uprisings and broken windows? Do you think the Prime Minister would not be presented with bologna sandwiches if he visited those provinces?

We are a peace-loving people and therein lies our problem. We think justice will be done because it deserves to be done and because we need justice. The fact is, though, that we are not getting justice. We are not getting a square deal out of confederation and we are not getting the response from the federal government that we deserve. So I say to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry, to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and to the Prime Minister that they had better talk about more than the Constitution in Victoria when the conference takes place next month. There is a very sad state of affairs in this country. We are out of touch with the people and there is growing frustration on the part of many about the response they are getting from elected governments. We must respond to them if Canada is to continue as a viable, economic unit and as a country with ambitious and energetic people. My plea is not only on behalf of the fisheries; it is generalized for the whole Canadian nation.

Mr. Crouse: Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity to speak briefly on the proposal made by the President of the Treasury Board which seeks to amend clause 3 of Bill C-207. This amendment is in keeping with the proposals that were put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East. The amendment states that the Minister of the Environment is the Minister of Fisheries for Canada. That, of course, is a step in the right direction but it is only a step.

Anyone who listened carefully to the remarks just made by the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate will have, I am sure, a better appreciation of the situation existing in Atlantic Canada regarding its fishing industry. He covered many of the points at issue and put them forcefully before the government. What is needed now is action by the government. The hon. member covered many of the points to which I intended referring.

It is evident to those of us who live in Atlantic Canada that the fishing industry faces many serious problems. It is also evident to us that the government is downgrading this industry. I say that for several reasons. I am not quite sure what the minister will be called if the amendment is accepted. Will he be