

Obviously, fishermen appreciate assistance by way of social measures; it is a redistribution of the wealth of the country, so to speak. We are thinking and doing things now for the stabilization of conditions in the country which we never thought of in earlier years. We believe that the old people, as they go down the hill of life, should be looked after, and so we have provided old age assistance for them. We believe the young people growing up should be made strong citizens, and for their benefit, we have a system of family allowances.

Honourable senators, if you were to travel through the fishing districts in Nova Scotia today and compare them with other days, you would be surprised at the important progress that has been made in schools, housing and general accommodation. The fisherman, with a family of perhaps seven or eight children, appreciates an opportunity to share through these means in the abundance of this vast land; and we as representatives from the province of Nova Scotia feel that we should support this sharing, because it is good for the country.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Mr. Kinley:** I have always realized that there might be some difficulty in devising a scheme for the payment of unemployment insurance to fishermen, but I have never thought it was anything to worry about. I have been too long in politics not to know that when there is reason for delay the Government moves slowly, and when it wants to do something it usually finds a way of doing it. The Government feels that this is the time to take the step we are now taking. We from Nova Scotia feel that the fishermen of our province should get this kind of assistance, so that they will not return home in the winter season, or during lay-offs or refits, to unemployment. Of course the deep sea fisherman is kept busy all year, but the shore fisherman has a lay-off period between seasons. The passage of this bill will mean that fishermen will share in some of the benefits available to men on the payrolls of other industries.

Not long ago a fellow came to me and asked for a job. I said: "You are a fisherman. Why don't you go fishing?" He told me in some detail how he had fished for twenty years, but that fishermen got no fringe benefits, no holidays with pay and no unemployment insurance, and that the men who worked in town got better pay. I pointed out to him that our industry depended on the fishing industry, that if there were no fishermen going to sea there would be no need for vessels or equipment. Well,

he seemed to think that I was trying to persuade him to go and work where other people did not choose to go.

In days gone by when two fishermen had to face the open sea in a small dorry, it was then a most hazardous occupation. But with the use of machinery much of the hazard has gone. We do not lose many men in the fishing industry today. True, they work hard and they must maintain their place in the fleet. We want them to have a stable future, with the right to share in unemployment insurance benefits along with other workers in Canada.

**Hon. A. K. Hugessen:** Honourable senators, I was a member of this Senate when the first unemployment insurance bill was introduced, I think in the year 1940. I took a keen interest in the measure when it came to us, and I have followed closely the various amending bills that have been submitted to us from time to time. In fact, I think I had the privilege of explaining one or two of them to the Senate in earlier years.

I must say that, speaking by and large, I think this has been one of the most useful and progressive pieces of legislation in our time. I have been delighted, as the years have gone on, to find that it has been possible to include among those eligible for the benefits of unemployment insurance larger and larger segments of the working population of our country. And I am indeed glad to see by this bill that it has now been found possible to provide for at least certain segments of the fishing industry.

This question has been considered, I know, for some years, and on several occasions we were told that the difficulties of introducing unemployment insurance in the fishing industry were so great that it was impossible to devise any scheme of more or less general application. I am glad to know that the difficulties appear now to have been overcome.

There was one point about which I wanted to ask my honourable friend, and perhaps he would touch on it when he closes the debate. He mentioned the unemployment insurance fund and said that it was in very good shape. I have no doubt about that, but I wondered as a matter of information whether he has the figures on the total assets of the fund for the last two or three years, and if when he replies he could give us those figures.

**Hon. John T. Hackett:** Honourable senators, I might speak for the farmers, but I shall not. We have seasonal occupations throughout this country: there were the ice-men who had a seasonal and paying occupation until natural ice was supplanted by the scientific production of cooling devices; there