

*Small Businesses Loans Act*

Today on the East Coast of Canada, the French fishing fleet is overfishing as much as it wants and the Canadian Government is scared to death to even board those boats. It is afraid, it is shaking in its shoes. The Government will board a Canadian boat if a fisherman is overfishing, but it will not board a French boat. If the French flag is up, beware, do not go close to that boat. If the American flag is up, beware, do not go close to that boat. Perhaps the Government might board a Spanish boat because Spanish boats proceed only at about eight or 10 knots, but it will certainly board Canadian boats.

For example, on Friday night the Government closed the quota on capelin, the small fish that are primarily sold to the Japanese market. Fishermen throughout eastern Canada are outraged today because there is capelin, in the water, there are buyers who want to buy the capelin but the fishermen are not allowed to catch it. Why? Because the Government says that fishermen are only allowed to catch 15,000 metric tonnes of capelin this year because it thinks that this is all the market can bear.

It is funny, but the Government forgot one thing. It forgot that it gave the Russians 17,000 metric tonnes of capelin and the Russian boats off the East Coast of Canada are able to catch as much capelin as they want right up to December 31.

**Mr. Henderson:** We're saving it for them.

**Mr. Baker:** We are saving it for the poor Russians. There are even Russian boats that are willing to come into Canadian harbours on the East Coast to buy capelin from the fishermen, but the Russians can catch the capelin because they have a quota of 17,000 metric tonnes. The Canadian fishermen are not allowed to catch capelin to sell to the Russians because their quota of 15,000 metric tonnes is all caught.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Siddon) was in eastern Canada for the last three days. I think he showed up in Ottawa last evening. I understand that he is trying to address the problem. Certainly, though, there appears to be a total lack of communication. If there is any reason for what the federal Government did about capelin, then that has not been communicated properly to the fishermen of eastern Canada. I do not know how that action can be explained, but there must be some reasoning behind it somewhere. Capelin is considered to be an under-utilized species. If it is under-utilized, the Government will give some to the Russians, some to the EEC and some to this nation and that nation. But here are the Canadians with their quota cut off.

That is the attitude of the Government of Canada toward fishermen. It took the Fisheries Improvement Loans Program that gave loans to fishermen who were trying to make a living, trying to get by day to day, trying to feed their families, and cut it off, the only loan program for fishermen. The Government will not even allow government guarantees on loans but if the fisherman pays a fee, the Government will give a guarantee on 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the loan at the big bank. That is incredible. It is an absolute joke.

An Hon. Member has just handed me a note saying that the farm Bill which will be introduced has a user fee attached to it. That Bill will be introduced in the Chamber very shortly. Under that Bill, \$5.5 billion is in circulation. There are only a couple of farmers in my riding, but there is \$5.5 billion in circulation and the Government is now saying that it will make farmers pay a fee in order to get guarantees. The Small Businesses Loans Act collected in this past financial year \$7.5 million from that fee in order to pay some of its expenses. Imagine the fees the Government will now collect from the farmers of Canada under a Bill that will be introduced in this Chamber in a few moments.

What is the default rate on farm loans? Of the \$5.5 billion that is in circulation, the Government has had to pay less than \$15 million on defaults. If what the hon. gentleman just passed to me is right, the Government will make a windfall profit on every loan it guarantees to the farmers of Canada after the Bill is introduced this afternoon. I would advise Hon. Members who are interested in loans to farmers—and I know, Madam Speaker, that we are dealing with loans to fishermen—that I doubt I would let that go through without a lot of debate.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader has worked this out right to the second. He brings in the Bill on the last day of sitting, a Tuesday after everyone sat in this Chamber practically all night and everyone is tired and sleepy. He brings in the Bill at the last minute and says: "Well, this happens to be the last day of the month and if you don't pass the Bill, there ain't going to be no more loans for fishermen or farmers or anybody else".

One could ask why he did not bring this Bill before the House sooner. He brought a lot of nonsense into the Chamber before. Farmers and fishermen will now ask their Members of Parliament how they allowed the Government to make them pay money out of their own pockets for loans.

Imagine going into the bank and saying: "I would like to get a loan," and the bank manager saying: "Well, in order for me to lend you some money, you have to give me some money". That is the law passed by the Parliament of Canada on the last day of June, 1987. The farmer will look at the bank manager and say: "You're crazy. If I had money to give you, I wouldn't be coming in here to get a loan". The bank manager will say: "Well, you had better write to your Member of Parliament because he passed the Bill".

I do not know what is going on here. I imagine it is an extension of the user-pay policies of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), but there is something radically wrong with the Government of Canada. There is something radically wrong with us. I do not know, maybe you could make a ruling. We cannot sit tomorrow. We have to conclude our proceedings today. Perhaps the Chair can figure out some way to communicate to all our farmers and fishermen the fact that the House did not appreciate what the Government and its House Leader have done with these two Bills.