

if it is the cause of the minister's inability to accept the challenge of the opportunity, then he has my sympathy and my support. If, on the other hand, it is not that, then I suggest that he should give more serious consideration to taking over Mr. Higgins' job. He might be better suited for it. However, I suspect it is the former reason. I expect he struggles alone in his fight on behalf of Canadian fishermen. I will just repeat that I find it passing strange.

We have the opportunity, for example, to attract the East Germans to the marine slip in the Halifax shipyards, \$1.5 million worth of work, but we have done nothing about it. However, if they were looking for increased quotas, I would not say to the minister he has taken the wrong posture with respect to that because I would not give them increased quotas. The fact of the matter is that it is to their advantage to use our yards, our ports and our facilities. They have had a free ride for a long time, as the minister knows. They have used our navigational aids, our search and rescue capacity, and our ports for emergency purposes, and can continue to do so. I just think it should be done on an organized basis, with the full awareness of the government, so that the provinces, municipalities, ports and towns could capitalize on onshore expenditures and the supply of ships, overhauls and repairs. Millions of dollars are being missed by not being aggressive. In doing that I do not believe the minister would significantly impair his capacity to bargain for the concessions he has in mind and about which we are all aware.

● (2042)

With respect to the bill more specifically, concerns have been expressed with respect to the broad authority and power of the minister to levy fees without adequate consultation. While the minister may have gone ahead with the establishment of fisheries advisory boards on the east and west coasts—some hon. members seem to feel they have been established; others find that there are people whom the government pays \$10,000 or \$15,000 for advice on what should be done in herring fisheries or other fisheries—to the best of my knowledge the minister has not carried through on his correspondence with me. As a matter of fact, on February 23, 1977, one year ago, the minister indicated that he would be establishing advisory boards.

Fisheries advisory boards for the east and west coasts, proposed Monday by (the minister), will only benefit the fishing industry if fishermen themselves are appointed board members, spokesmen . . . said—

I wish the minister would find some occasion on which to keep hon. members better advised as to just what is going on. For example, do we have a board on the eastern shore? If we do, it would be very interesting to hear from the board, to know who is on it, to know the work that is being contemplated and to know how the minister feels that he can best be advised by such a board. To the best of my knowledge we do not have one. In late September the minister indicated to me that his officials were presently working on the details of such counsel, but he expected it would be some time before he knew precisely how the boards would work. It would be interesting to follow through a little bit more with that because consulta-

tion has been seen to be less than effective or desirable in terms of the input the fishermen are capable of making.

Several years ago the Eastern Shore Fishermen's Protection Association met with federal and provincial departmental people and set out some priorities. They were never followed, and nothing really ever came of them. Apart from meetings initiated by fishermen individually or by the president of that association on their behalf, to the best of my knowledge there has not been an on-going and meaningful consultative process. If the minister wants the benefit of the views and knowledge of fishermen, he should involve himself in discussions with individual fishermen. That can be done only through his department.

I wonder if the minister had any knowledge of what would happen to him when he introduced that little amendment the other night. I am sure the minister is concerned about the sentiments expressed by hon. members. He has shown us the courtesy of being here and listening. He has paid attention as I have watched him today and over the last three or four days. However, in the area of the ability of the department to work with the men in the field, I know this is very difficult, but, on the other hand, it is very important. It is also important that the minister remember that his officials must work closely with fishermen as well as processing and marketing people.

For example, if my information is correct, and I have no reason to believe it is not, the department has had a study in its possession for some time. This study is a very useful one and involves the role large cold storage freezers can play in helping the industry to move from production into marketing or to a combination of both. The department has had this study in its possession for four or five months or perhaps even longer. I know the study dealt with the areas around Sydney, Halifax, Lunenburg, Yarmouth, the strait area and so forth. It dealt with the need for, and the use of, major cold storage centres. I wonder why the study has remained secret. Why can the industry not have access to it? The first complaint I had about this came from the National Harbours Board. Why can the government's Crown agency not have access to studies if they are available? If this particular study is available, I suggest that the minister is not being open and frank with the people in the industry. His failure to consult adequately and continually with fishermen is an admission of his inability to be open and frank with them. There is no question that we need strategically located major cold storage plants. I think they should be privately operated, but it is very important, whether they are in the hands of the industry or of the government, that they be common users. That is a personal feeling I have. If that study relates to cold storage, why can the industry not have access to it? Why do we not know what is going on? Is the minister saving the study for an election gimmick? Is it getting that close?

Far too little has been done in the area of bait freezing and storage capacity. Where attempts have been made by private fishermen to establish bait freezing capacity for their own use in their own areas, those fishermen have been met with frustration either as a result of provincial or federal bureaucra-