

*Fisheries Ministry*

Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. He follows a number of members of this House, including myself, in that position, and I am sure he will live up to his responsibilities most capably.

I should also like to extend congratulations to the hon. member for Humber-St. George's St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall) on his appointment as spokesman on fisheries for the opposition. I hope this does not mean he will not speak on behalf of the veterans; I doubt very much whether he will discontinue his representations on their behalf. I might add that it is going to be interesting having two Newfoundlanders talking about fisheries across the aisle, and that we are likely to hear a lot about fisheries in the coming year.

The bill before us appears to contain two main points. One is that there should be a deputy minister, and the other is that fisheries should be given priority. With regard to the first point, I understand that in law the Deputy Minister of the Environment is, in fact, legally the Deputy Minister of Fisheries. As the hon. member knows, within the structure of the department there is a deputy minister and two senior assistant deputy ministers, one for fisheries and one for the environment.

I am sure the hon. member knows enough about organization and structure to realize it is a good idea to have one man at the top. Structurally, I do not think this arrangement can be faulted. However, I should like to make it clear that, within this departmental structure, fisheries and environment are treated as co-equals. Each has a senior assistant deputy minister at its head and, if I may say so with respect to fisheries, a very capable senior assistant deputy minister supported by a most capable staff.

As I am sure the hon. member knows, many of the staff both in Ottawa and in the regions do in fact come from Newfoundland, and the people of Newfoundland have no cause to feel that their interests are not being served by the people who work in the public service in the fisheries branch of the Department of the Environment and Fisheries. I could name names but I shall not do so in the House this afternoon.

I would simply point out, for example, that the chairman of the Canadian Saltfish Corporation, an organization created by the Government of Canada, a Liberal government, and one which has been a Godsend to the fishermen in my area, is a Newfoundlander. We also had advisers at the Law of the Sea Conference like Dr. Arthur May who has now returned to Ottawa and will be advising us on quotas and stocks—a most capable man, an outstanding Newfoundlander and an outstanding Canadian—who will be playing an active role, I am sure, when the Law of the Sea Conference reconvenes next spring.

I am merely calling attention to the fact that within the departmental structure, within the Ministry of Fisheries, there are capable people, dedicated people, who know their jobs and who are working on behalf of the people not only of western Canada but all across the nation. If the hon. member is seeking an organizational structure for fisheries, it is already there. It is separate, distinct, unique. It is working.

[Mr. Rompkey.]

One point we should consider is that Environment and Fisheries have to work very closely together. The main point is preservation of stocks. Fishery stocks live in an environment. Obviously if you are to protect the stocks that you have, you must protect the environment. There is a good and adequate, sound basic reason why environment and fisheries should work very closely together, should be integrated in the best way possible, and I think this is happening at the present time.

● (1620)

It is also true to say that the fisheries should be given a priority. I notice in the bill the phrase that the fisheries should be given a priority. One indication of the fact that this government does give priority to the fisheries—indeed Liberal governments in the past have given priority to the fisheries—is the appointment of the present Minister of State (Fisheries) (Mr. LeBlanc). Earlier the hon. member gave credit to the minister and in fact was prepared to give praise to him for his efforts on behalf of the fisheries up to the present time, and I echo that praise. He has been a good minister and I am sure he will continue to do a good job. But the appointment of the minister must surely be more important than the appointment of the deputy minister.

There are people who say that the bureaucracy is strong and that it is growing stronger every day, but I for one would like to believe that the minister is still the important figure. He is the creator of policy and sees that that policy is carried out. I think the fact that the minister was appointed by a Liberal government on the recommendation of the same Atlantic caucus, the same meeting of Atlantic candidates to which the hon. member referred earlier, is an indication of the priority given to the fisheries.

With regard to his control over budget, if the minister was able to get \$50 million from the federal treasury to subsidize price support in Canada, I think this is an indication that he has certainly the ear of cabinet and that he will not fall short when it comes to obtaining funds to carry out the particular programs that he has in mind. I can point to other programs as well where the fisheries have been given the necessary sums to do what is required to be done at any given point in time in the industry's history. The minister has shown that he can get these funds, and I believe he will continue to do so.

With regard to small craft harbours, it is true that the budget this year has been cut. But it was a Liberal government that tripled the budget for small craft harbours two years ago. The fact that the budget was cut this year shows that we cannot have restraint on the one hand and not on the other. If we are to have a policy of restraint and budget cuts where necessary, then this policy should be applied across the board.

Where does one make cuts? The answer is in areas that are capital intensive, in areas that are not labour intensive. This does not affect fishermen in small communities who want to work in the off season. This is where the minister chose to make his cuts and I think he has probably made a wise decision.

The building of wharves, breakwaters and what have you, is done more and more by equipment and machinery rather than men. But let me also tell the House what