

Fisheries Improvement Loans Act

I just want to poach in a few comments of concern and take this opportunity as a member from the west coast who has been involved in fishing. Actually I was a gillnetter at one time trying to get myself through university, and when I am out on the coast and on the water I do use the opportunity to have dialogue with fishermen. I visit the up-coast fishing plants. I stop and have great evenings on some of the fishery patrol vessels and with the people clearing streams. I get a grassroots feel for the problems out there.

Before moving on to that, I would just like to remind the House that this bill is needed at this point in time, but it should be part of the over-all review in terms of credit and the type of financial service the Government of Canada is making available to the various sectors of the Canadian community.

As the minister said in his opening remarks, we are now moving into guarantees, and the guarantees are moving from \$80 million up to some \$250 million. That in itself is not serious. The cost of these guarantees is about three-quarters of 1 per cent, but the Federal Business Development Bank is also substantially involved in guarantee programs, the cost of which before the recent rash of bankruptcies was running at about one half of 1 per cent and is probably now up over 1 per cent.

We are getting ourselves into a downstream liability under these guarantee programs, and I think we in the House should ask ourselves just what contingent liability we are placing upon tomorrow's taxpayers and upon the treasury of the country.

We are getting into guarantees like \$200 million with regard to the Chrysler Corporation. We see possibly \$250 million as the expanse of this program for east and west coast fisheries, which benefits many people. It is true that the Chrysler program will benefit workers a couple of years down the stream, but we are also in a patchwork quilt dilemma with the various programs we keep sustaining and extending for another couple of years. The review that the Minister of State for Small Businesses (Mr. Lapointe) has told us about, and which has been in the works now for some time, is a very important review, and this particular subject matter should be part of that review as it fits into this whole question of the types of financial services delivered to the community and the contingent liability we are getting into, in the form of guarantees.

One of the things which has concerned me is the fact that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans seems to be moving into a marketing stance on both coasts. I am not familiar with the detailed aspects regarding the east coast, but I do know that everything we harvest on the west coast is marketed and sold. I suppose it is because I am on this side of the House, I am a Conservative and I believe in limited government and that there is a better lifestyle and more efficiency in activities widely dispersed in the private sector, that I keep questioning why the Department of Fisheries and Oceans should be moving in and making threats to move into marketing when I think the job it is doing in the enhancement and protection of species deserves examination. That should be where the total effort is concentrated, and if the department needs more resources in terms of protecting, enhancing and developing the

species, that is where its activities should be concentrated, particularly on the west coast.

The spawning streams in the state of Washington have been wiped out. When we see what Mount St. Helens has done, we know what nature can do to nature in terms of distortions. True enough, British Columbia and the B.C. coast are more stable geologically than that particular area down there. Perhaps we should be moving into hatcheries that are at the mouth of our river systems so that we can protect the species. As the minister knows, the protection of the species, or the escape of the species into the spawning grounds now, has an added pressure on it and we have to allow more and more of the salt water escapement to move upstream in order to adjust to new harvesting pressures that are on the upstream spawning grounds.

• (1750)

I am not knowledgeable enough to enter a debate on this, but it troubles me when I see, up in the rivers and in the hinterland of British Columbia, power boats and gillnets. It is putting a pressure on that is very difficult to control, and it causes factions and pressures between the native peoples, who have a right to the usufructuary rights of the land. I will stand and argue and debate that, but here is a problem that has to be resolved, and we have to be moving in with the federal knowledge, with the provinces, to try to do that. Perhaps some of this problem can be resolved if we move into the technology of hatcheries down lower at the mouth of the Fraser river end of our streams.

Let us consider herring. One of the things that has truly troubled many of us on the west coast is what we have done to our herring. It was not the Department of Fisheries that outlawed pit lamping in the gulf of Georgia. It was the skippers of the seine boats who outlawed that rape of the water. They would go out there and set their seines, and the pit lamps would be down there, and they would pull these seines in, and they could pull up juvenile salmon, not herring. Every time you gather in a ball of fish like that, the mortality is tremendous.

We need a lot of interface and a lot of talk to prevent some of the things we are doing to ourselves on the west coast. But when we allow a harvesting operation to move right up into the spawning beds of herring, right up on to the kelp, right up on to the rocks where they are about to spawn, and we take that resource away, particularly in light of what most of us on the west coast feel who know the waters, when you allow that, you are putting a pressure on that resource at which we should really be taking a good hard look.

An hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Huntington: There is a big sports fishing industry out on the west coast, and I am a sports fisherman. But perhaps we must take a really good look at disallowing the use of herring in the sports fishery. I can tell you that there are little bays and coves all around with sand bottoms, which formerly had tremendous, boiling populations of herring and feeder fish, and