

Fisheries Improvement Loans Act

increased capital that is made available to it, but I suspect that this industry also needs an increased operating fund in order to pay the higher interest rate to be charged, if nothing else. It may well be that with an increased source of capital, the fishing industry could operate more efficiently and afford to pay increased interest rates.

Since I came to this house last fall I have noticed that there has been a deliberate—perhaps I should not impute motives to the government—but there has been a consistent, at least, approach to solving problems in this way. When any industry has a problem, the government says: Let us lend it some money. We have not been considering the operating problems of the industries concerned.

I do not know whether the minister is allowed to discuss the matter at this stage, but I would like to register a protest in this respect. I do not think that all the problems of industries can be solved by merely lending more money. Serious consideration must be given to the income aspect of these industries.

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, the remarks of my hon. friend opposite a moment ago, and the confusion that arose therefrom, could very well have been avoided if the bill under discussion had been properly drafted and presented.

Mr. McGrath: He is not even in his seat.

Mr. Carter: Obviously, this bill has been sloppily drafted. The minister's speech in Vancouver on February 1, wherein he made certain statements which almost completely contradict the intent of the bill, is an indication that confusion still reigns in the Liberal government. I have listened with a great deal of interest to the speeches made on this bill and do not mind confessing that I am becoming more frustrated each day. I must confess, too, that I find it extremely difficult to reconcile the contents of this bill with the statement of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) in Vancouver on February 1.

As my colleague the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has already pointed out, in the course of the speech the minister made in Vancouver on February 1 he stated the following when referring to this bill, Bill C-151:

This act which has recently been updated is geared to finance loans up to \$25,000.

In the same speech he said that fishermen would be able to borrow this amount of money at a lower rate of interest than is

available to anyone else in Canada, that is, anyone other than the government of Canada itself. The minister went on to say that the interest rate would be geared to the interest rate paid by the government of Canada on its long term loans. If Ottawa paid 6 per cent, the fishermen would be asked to pay 7 per cent. If the interest rate on federal borrowings falls to 5 per cent, the rate charged under this act will be 1 per cent higher. The difference will be 1 per cent above the interest rate paid by the federal government on its borrowings. That is what the minister said in Vancouver, but I do not see any reference to this formula in the bill before us.

Mr. McGrath: The minister is showing his usual contempt for parliament.

Mr. Carter: I do not see in this bill any reference to lifting the ceiling on the amount to be lent. The minister has suggested that the ceiling will be lifted from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Therefore, I do not think that we on this side of the house can be accused of trying to hold up the bill when we ask that there be included in it those things the minister has stated. We have no desire whatever to make a liar of the Minister of Fisheries.

An hon. Member: You will not be able to, either.

Mr. Carter: The minister made a statement in Vancouver, and it is our great desire to see put into practice those things which he mentioned. We presume that what the minister said was correct and that he was speaking in his capacity as Minister of Fisheries. The minister said fishermen will be able to borrow \$25,000 and the interest rate will be just 1 per cent above that paid by the government of Canada on its borrowings. We expect this principle to be included in this legislation. We expect that legislation will be drafted and put before the house to encompass the minister's suggestion and recommendations.

The minister made another interesting remark, namely, that the provisions of this act will be similar to those with regard to loans made under the National Housing Act, whereby people can borrow money with which to buy or build a new home. This is poor consolation to me, and I suppose to fishermen generally, certainly those on the east coast. I presume this measure also applies to fishermen on the west coast. I say this because the ceiling on the interest rate has been lifted from 5 per cent to an amount to be designated by the Governor in Council.