

which they can become involved in obtaining the harvesting equipment and the capital to harvest it—for instance, licences, vessels, etc. Once they have those things, the Indians need assistance with processing. It has to be developed. They almost have to have the assistance to vertically develop it. Finally, the Indians have to be given a share, almost guaranteed a share, of marketing. There is a market for fish and it is an excellent one.

The only way to realize the economic benefits of the only resource that can really provide assistance to the Indians who live on the coast of British Columbia is by guaranteeing access to this resource and its economic returns. Social problems, such as housing and health, are there. These are communities where there is 75 to 90 per cent unemployment. Unless there is a commitment made or at least an Indian policy paper on fishing presented, these people are going to continue to wander in social and economic chaos.

Now I come to the licence limitation scheme. I recall from days that have passed the fact that licence limitation was going to help the industry. There were too many boats chasing too few fish. We wanted to get them into manageable proportion and make them efficient so that the people who did fish could earn income. We would therefore take the pressure off the resource, and for the people who did remain involved, those bona fide fishermen—that term was cast around so often—would be provided with a decent living.

From the people I have seen in the industry, and in my opinion, the industry is in absolute chaos. The scheme failed to achieve its objectives. A lot of bona fide fishermen have been forced out of the industry. It is virtually an adversary system now where the fisherman is against the fisheries department. There is no attempt to co-operate whatsoever. Many bona fide fishermen have been forced out and now it is a business. Instead of a labour-intensive operation supplying a lot of jobs for people, we now have a very exclusive, highly capitalized operation that is operated by people who are not fishermen. They are entrepreneurs who may be farmers in Saskatchewan or small businessmen, logging contractors or whatever. But basically bona fide fishermen have been forced out of the industry. They have lost their vessels and their incomes and a great deal of harm has been done.

The fleet size comes to mind. There were too few boats chasing too many fish. The boats chasing those fish now could fish out the industry. We are continuing to slide seine boats off the ways. There are more and more of them every year, bigger and more capable seine vessels. I do not understand the application of this particular program when it is producing more vessels and more efficient ones that not only go out to take the target fish but take all the other fish around. They have virtually put a stop to the herring fishery.

With regard to the whole question of capitalization, this legislation being put before the House encourages a program which is absolutely opposite to the one that has been cited. It will increase overcapitalization and the size of the fleet. That is not in the interests of British Columbia.

#### *Fisheries Improvement Loans Act*

The licence limitation program is literally beyond hope. It is unfair and unsuccessful. It has placed the management of the resource in British Columbia in chaos.

Now I come to the question of international agreements, again as part of management. The halibut agreement has harmed a great number of fishermen. There is a feeling that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans of the Government of Canada did not negotiate with the United States vigorously enough. With respect to the boundaries and the Dixon Entrance, there is a feeling among the fishermen of B.C. that the Government of Canada does not represent their interests: first of all, that it is not western in orientation, and second, that it only promotes the interests of central Canada. When we go to the table to negotiate in Washington with representatives of the United States government, B.C. fishermen feel that other concerns come up. It seems that we are concerned about matters that affect other areas in Canada and fisheries get traded off. Short-term political gains seem to come to the fore in favour of the long-term protection of our share in this particular resource, whether it is reciprocal fishing agreements or environmental protection, whether it is a halibut agreement or fishing boundaries. There is a profound feeling that we do not defend the interests of the west coast fishery. It seems that we are willing to sacrifice those interests.

I am not sure how one remedies that kind of a situation, but I am certainly concerned about it. I am also concerned about the mechanism we use with the United States where we negotiate with their committees and then the United States Senate determines any treaty arrangement after that. We are bargaining twice. We are invited to make representations twice. It is extremely unfair and frustrating for Canadian fishermen.

In conclusion, I have said that these are general observations, but I would invite the minister to comment on them. I know that the people in my riding and in all the other ridings in British Columbia are deeply concerned. I recognize that this legislation is designed to suit a particular purpose, but I think it is on the wrong track, that the policy statement that is implied or read into it is probably on the wrong track for the west coast, though as my colleagues have said, it may be very appropriate for the east coast.

The management program is erratic and unfair. I seriously urge the minister to make some statement to this House about where the fishery is going, so that we can provide some stability to people who want to invest and work in it. People cannot earn a living with these uncertainties. Loss of income and bankruptcy is an all too possible future scenario.

Specific recommendations have been stated before by my colleague, the hon. member for Nanaimo-Alberni. Some of them are simply observations and recommendations that I would ask for comments on by the minister. First of all, before we get into an ad hoc approach, such as this improvement loan bill before us today, we need a clear statement. One does not exist.

I suggest the way a clear statement could be developed is if we follow the model of the forest industry in British Columbia.