

The Address—Mr. Crouse

rescue them, Captain Bernard Tanner, by a stroke of good luck, heard their call for assistance, and though he has only a 65-foot dragger, he towed the *Alfred D.* 400 miles to port.

If we abolished the 12-mile fishing limit, and used the present ships engaged in fisheries protective work, we would have the nucleus of a Canadian coastguard without any additional cost to the taxpayer. I would impress upon this government the definite need of a Canadian coastguard, and urge it to consider establishing this service at the earliest possible date.

I listened with much interest some weeks ago to the hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Stuart) when he referred to the prices received for fish some 20 years ago. I should like to remind this house that there has been little change between then and the present time. In fact, the price of fish in Nova Scotia has been more stable than has the Canadian dollar. The cost of living index shows that it has decreased considerably in value during the past 10 years, but we receive almost as much today for codfish as we received 10 years ago.

In 1947 the cost of constructing a 100-foot fishing dragger was \$140,000 and codfish was selling to the wholesalers at 3½ cents a pound by fishermen. Today a dragger of 100 feet will cost \$280,000 and codfish are worth 3¼ cents a pound, according to the press of Thursday, November 7.

There is no clearer evidence of the inflation that has spread throughout Canada, and the neglect and disregard of the fishing industry in the last 10 years under a Liberal administration with regard to costs. Unfortunately the price of fish did not rise in proportion with the costs of the ship, and the fishermen are today faced with these higher costs, not only for the ship but also for oil, rope, paint, fishing nets, refits and in fact everything connected with the fisheries operation.

It is clear that the fishermen do not need subsidies or assistance from the government. What they need is a fairer price for their landed product in relation to their increased costs. Clearly the time has come for governments, both federal and provincial, to direct their efforts and funds to the encouragement of greater fish consumption. In addition, I would urge the present government to add to its investigation program and investigate the prices and the spread in prices paid to Canadian fishermen, in comparison with their United States counterparts, with a view to improving the economic lot of the fishermen of Canada.

We have had a strange event happen this week. There have been rumours to the effect that an investigation into the primary prices of fish was to be carried out and on Monday an announcement was made in the local press that prices paid to the fishermen in the maritime provinces would increase by 20 per cent. At a time when all other commodities were advancing in price the prices paid to the fishermen remained static or declined. Now when other products are levelling off or declining we are advised by the manipulators in the fishing business that they are advancing the prices paid to the primary producers by 20 per cent. To those fishermen who were told that they would have to tie their boats to the dock, to the workers in the fish plants who were told that there would be no employment for them if they voted for a Conservative government, this will be extremely welcome news and certainly a contradiction of what they had heard prior to June 10.

I have listened with interest to hon. members on both sides of this house, representing constituencies in the west discuss the problem of wheat. I have never been to the west but I should like to remind hon. members, after listening to the many discussions, that this is a problem of abundance, of God's bounty. There is a biblical reference that in another time it was decided to tear down the barns and build greater. We have done just that in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and today there is much soul-searching to sell this wheat. We have no similar glut of fish on the eastern coast for the product of our primary producers is sold in the open market at a price which the public are willing to pay. This simple expedient was apparently never recently applied to the product wheat which has a value set by the government. We hear of the injustices to the western farmer, but he is still allowed to plant his crop.

Consider the attitude of the former Liberal government with regard to the Canadian fishermen. Our fishermen had to remain outside a limit of 12 miles from the Canadian coastline, while fishermen of every other nation were allowed to fish within three miles of the Canadian headland, and to fish on our prolific inshore banks. Further, if one of our Canadian fishing draggers were caught fishing within the 12-mile limit, a \$500 fine was imposed. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there was little doubt in the minds of Canada's fishermen that it was time for a change. I would impress upon this government the need of reviewing the 12-mile fishing limit.

In closing, I think it is only fair to say that the people of Queens-Lunenburg look forward to the future with new hope under the