

Atlantic Fisheries Restructuring Act

Prince Edward Island opposed. The Province of New Brunswick opposed. The Province of Nova Scotia has not yet signed. The Province of Quebec is in limbo. We do not know where it is at.

That is where we leave the fishing industry with this Bill, as a social measure whose inestimable consequence may very well be negative rather than positive without judicious management and without consideration for both the private fishermen and the little processor.

Hon. W. Bennett Campbell (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I realize that time is quickly running out on the third reading stage of Bill C-170. I would be remiss if I did not take advantage of the opportunity to make a few very brief comments with respect to the Bill presently under consideration.

I will begin, Mr. Speaker, by asking Members of the House and myself why we are considering such a Bill today. I think the answer is very clear to all of us. The answer is that it became necessary because of the dire straits being faced by the fishing industry of Atlantic Canada that Governments, and I use that in the plural sense deliberately, become involved in providing some form of assistance to enable the survival of our fish processing and fishing industry in Atlantic Canada. I am sure all Members are aware of the significant impact which the fishing industry has in Atlantic Canada. It provides some 90,000 jobs for Canadians living in Atlantic Canada. It is with reluctance that Governments are involved in private sector enterprises. I ask Members of the House what the alternatives are if our fishing industry is to prevail and to succeed.

My Province of Prince Edward Island and specifically my own riding, is made up of independent processors who have provided employment opportunities and a solid backbone to the economy of many of the communities around my riding and around our Province. They have expressed concern and anxiety as to the implications of Bill C-170. Obviously something has to be done. A response had to be made to the potential collapse of the fishing industry in Atlantic Canada. That response came in the form of arrangements and agreements between Provinces and the Government of Canada where in Provincial Governments and federal Governments, along with the private sector, would restructure companies to enable them to continue their operations and to bring their operations back on to a profit making basis.

I would like to add my words of accommodation to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. He has worked very diligently over long hours over many days to communicate, discuss and carry out consultations with various sectors of the industry, going all the way back to the Kirby task force and following through with direct interventions and direct meetings between the federal Minister and his provincial counterparts in Atlantic Canada. We also want to compliment him for his effort in addressing a number of issues which have surfaced since the beginning of the Kirby task force examination of the Atlantic fisheries.

From my own Province's point of view, we are talking about the second largest contributor to the economy of the Province of Prince Edward Island. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to say that I followed the discussions, beginning with the work of the Kirby task force, having served as a member of the ministerial subcommittee on the Atlantic fisheries. I met with the independent processors in my own riding and in Prince Edward Island. I was successful in being able to secure an opportunity for them to make their presentation before the Fisheries Committee.

● (1740)

I can only express the wish and the desire, which I am sure is shared by all Members, that this restructuring will enable a return to health for the fish processing sector and for the private entrepreneur within Atlantic Canada.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. It being 5.40 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings, pursuant to the provisions of the order made earlier today, and to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the Bill now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the third time and passed.

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BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—S.O. 62—GOVERNMENT SPENDING

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Huntington:

That this House agrees without reservation with the prediction of the Prime Minister made on August 13, 1969, in a nationally televised press conference when he said, "We'd soon be on the road to financial disaster if nothing were done to bring spending under control" and calls upon the government to initiate policies which would avoid the Prime Minister's prediction.

And the amendment of Mr. Blenkarn:

That the motion be amended by deleting the period at the end thereof and by adding the following words:

"including, but not limited to, the adoption forthwith of the Seventh Report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): It being 5.45 p.m., pursuant to order made Thursday, November 24, 1983, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the amendment of Mr. Blenkarn to the motion of Mr. Huntington under our supply proceedings.

Call in the Members.