

Our fishermen are now established in the last two or three years in a position where they need if not a price support; at least a price guarantee for their product. Now, one of the main fisheries on the Atlantic coast is the cod fishery. It is the oldest industry in this country and the majority of our fishermen on the Atlantic coast depend on code fishing for a living. This applies to a great section of Nova Scotia, it applies to the entire Magdalene Islands, to the Gaspé coast, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and the east coast of New Brunswick, more so in my constituency of Gloucester.

I think most of the members of this committee are aware that there is presently a movement in the United States to extend assistance throughout the entire New England states to their fishery industry and under date of June 10th, through a review known as "Washington through Canadian eyes" there was a report which had as its title "Canadian fishermen watch out" and it reads:

Serious consideration is being given in Congress to promoting aid to the American fishing industry which could spell plenty of trouble for us.

This was the headline of this article.

Now, it is a \$43 million program which is presently before Congress and it has been presented before Congress by William Bate, representative of the state of Massachusetts, calling for a \$43 million assistance program for the fishing industry and during the committee stage of this debate, strong words have been heard about Canadian fishermen taking markets away from New England fishermen and among the proposals put up by representative Bate, it included payment to fishermen of one cent a pound for ground fish which will be an additional grant to the price they will receive from the American fish buyers paying to the processing plants one third a cent a pound for fish they handle, and payment for boat and equipment improvements, a ten year loan at three per cent interest.

Now, the application of such a program by the American government could endanger our fishing industry of the Atlantic coast and we know that the basis of our industry—and perhaps it should not be quite as important in Nova Scotia as it is for the other Atlantic provinces—is the cod fishery, and when I say not as important to Nova Scotia, I mean because they have a much larger variety of deep sea fishing. They catch a larger quantity of haddock and flounder and more or less their operations are distributed over a ten or twelve month period whereas in the other provinces more so in Quebec and Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick our cod fishing industry is limited to a period of five or six months.

Now, I would ask the department and the minister to give their serious consideration to the possibility of having minimum price guarantee for the cod fishermen and here I would go further and suggest that under present conditions taking into consideration the cost of fishing gear, the operating expenses of the fishermen, the additional cost of fuel, the increased cost of fishing boats, fishing vessels, that our cod fishermen cannot carry on effectively unless they have a minimum guarantee of three cents a pound and I feel that very serious consideration should be given by the department to establishing a system which would guarantee our fishermen a price of three cents a pound for fresh cod based on the price paid for heads on and gutted. I leave this request with the minister but I am convinced that it will be given serious consideration.

Mr. MACLEAN (*Queens*): Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the remarks made by Mr. Robichaud. The fishing industry to a greater extent than almost any other industry in Canada with some exceptions, of course, is very dependent on export markets. Something like 65 to 70 per cent of our total fish production is exported and about 65 per cent of the total export is to be United States,