

*Deep Sea Fisheries Act*

rate of interest which it has paid in order to borrow money from other sources. If this course had been followed, the trust fund would have grown over the years and its disbursement today under the terms of the Deep Sea Fisheries Act would provide a real economic lift to our fishermen, especially if the capital sum was made available for the building and fitting-out of improved fishing vessels and the improvement of the conditions of the fishermen.

This is what the act calls for, and this is what the government and the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry are required to do. The government is not following this course; I charge it with reneging on a sacred trust. I charge the government with shirking its duties and responsibilities to the Canadian fishermen. Surely the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry can come up with something more positive and more definite for our fishermen, something which holds greater promise than the words of Bill C-133, which simply states in the explanatory note that the payment of bounties is no longer appropriate to present day circumstances and that the amount of the grant provided for in the act could be utilized in a more productive way. This flimsy excuse for expropriating \$4½ million which rightly belong to our fishermen is not good enough. It is not acceptable to me, nor is it acceptable to members on this side of the House.

The question being proposed is that Bill C-133, entitled an act to repeal the Deep Sea Fisheries Act, be now read a third time. So that the government will have time to reconsider this matter and come up with a positive program for the utilization of this fund of \$4½ million in a special manner in keeping with the terms of the original act, I move:

That the word "now" be left out and the words "this day six months" be added at the end of the question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, the subject matter of this bill which, as has been stated, is to repeal the Deep Sea Fisheries Act, has been discussed in the committee to the point of exhaustion. Quite a number of proposals were put forward for the consideration of the minister. He seemed to reject all those proposals and considerations out of hand, on two grounds. The first was that the fine technicalities of the situation were not as outlined in the speech made by the hon. member for South Shore

[Mr. Crouse.]

(Mr. Crouse), and the second was that the Washington Treaty had been abrogated by the United States about eight years after it became operative. Some members may recall that I suggested in the committee that whether or not the technicalities were as had been stated, the understanding had always been that this was a special fund which, as the hon. member for South Shore has properly said, was not provided by the taxpayers of Canada. I felt we had pursued the matter in committee as far as we could.

● (3:30 p.m.)

It is a very simple bill with only one clause, and one could not produce appropriate report stage amendments to it. As far as I am concerned, the final decision on this point should be made by the House. I did not oppose the bill being reported back to the House in its present form because I felt this was the place where the issue of principle must be joined in the final stage.

I was hoping, Mr. Speaker, that the minister would rise at this point to indicate some change in position, if not in respect of the proposal to repeal the act at least in respect of the attitude he stated before the committee about a particular and appropriate method of providing to the fishermen concerned what they have always considered to be their right under the terms of this treaty. Apparently he is not going to do that. I feel, therefore, that if this is the way in which the matter is to be left, I must support—and I do so gladly—the motion which has been placed before us for consideration, namely, that this bill be not passed at this time.

Before the bill was considered in committee I took the trouble to acquaint myself with the discussion that took place in this House in 1882 when the Deep Sea Fisheries Act was first proposed by the then Minister of Finance, Sir Leonard Tilley. It is quite clear from the context of that debate that, while it is not spelled out in set form, the concept of providing a return to the fishermen in some form from the interest on the \$4 million or \$4½ million was behind the introduction of the Deep Sea Fisheries Act.

I noted that a then member from British Columbia, Mr. DeCosmos, entered a plea that the fishermen of British Columbia be entitled to a share of the revenue from this fund, and that a Mr. Gillies, who was obviously a representative from one of the constituencies in the Great Lakes region, entered a plea that the fishermen of that part of Canada also be