

*Fisheries Improvement Loans Act*

expedited the interference of the provincial structures into the financing of the fishing fleet.

The federal government should take a long hard look at trying to arrange with the provinces for an equitable opportunity. Province A should not be pitted against province B by the creation of a more attractive loan structure in one province over another. As a result of that, certain ship owners are finding it convenient to move from one provincial jurisdiction to another, taking their boat and their licence with them. This leaves processing facilities behind. It takes the employment with it or leaves unemployed behind, and it is becoming a rather serious social problem as one province competes with the other.

Why do we not give some consideration to making this a bill which might replace the competitive financial proposition placed before fishermen by one province after another in order to attract that industry away from one province and into another? The transfer of a fishing capability from one community to another leaves an isolated community which may well become a ghost town. I think there must be more co-operation between the federal government and the provincial governments.

● (1730)

As has been mentioned earlier, the offshore sales conducted and negotiated by the minister were not conducted with the consent or the approval of the provinces. There is no excuse, in view of the commitment of fisheries ministers in the past 15 years, including that little recess in which we had our opportunity to govern, for a minister making a hasty decision and then confronting provincial counterparts with it, having given them no opportunity to consult. This is wrong. The minister decided that he knew who should market the fish, and he knew who should buy it. He knew everything that ought to be done. Serious objection was expressed by all interested in the fishing industry: if there were to be offshore sales, guarantees should not be supplied by the government and, certainly, any such guarantees should not be in the form of an opportunity to catch fish additional to the quantity already allocated to foreign sources. It is not good for this to happen.

The uncertainty which exists in the fishing industry throughout many of our coastal communities is intolerable, and I believe it could be corrected. We are predicting larger catches of various species of fish and I should like to discuss the herring seining operation, for instance. We have consistently reduced the quota which the herring seining fleet can catch and we have constrained that sector of the industry from going to certain historic grounds in which it used to fish. This is perhaps because Quebec thought the Fundy fleet should not be up in the Gulf, or maybe because Newfoundland thought it should not be off Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia people thought it should not fish off Nova Scotia, ignoring the fact that the seining fleet had created an ongoing year-round fishing operation to which the coast had not been accustomed before.

If it be necessary that the minister accept the pressures of politics from certain areas within Canada, then it becomes equally necessary that when there are additional quotas of any species available, if you rob Peter you had better pay him back. And don't just rob Peter to pay Paul. You had better pay Peter back. For instance, some of these seining boats were only allowed to be bought, built and financed by regulation of the federal government which stated, "You cannot build a boat unless it is licensed both to seine and to be a dragger as well." They were able for years to make their living from herring seining alone. They were never told, "If you do not use those dragger licences you are going to lose them." Consequently there are boats which originally had more than one licence but which had no need to operate under those other licences. The owners are now told they cannot operate under those other licences; they cannot renew them and they will not be able to make a living.

I cite this as an example because I believe there are fishers of other species who are likely to find themselves brought under constraint. I submit there has to be additional licensing opportunity so that, where possible, these boats could be used to make a living for a very proud group of people who have been accustomed to making their living in a hard way but who are now being deprived of that possibility. All these things have to be taken into consideration in the management of supply. If you deprive a guy of one privilege, let us look around and find him another one as we increase the total allowable catches, or, barring this, let us make it possible for him to participate in another fishery because, as I look through the charts which the government has provided, and see what has been the total allowable catch, what has been the historic catch, what has been the foreign catch, and what is the predicted catch, I find that there is a greater fishing opportunity with respect to a large number of species. Perhaps some of those who were deprived of their present living could be extended the privilege of fishing in the areas in which quotas are to be increased for other species—it may be haddock, it may be halibut, it may be cod. Let us not leave these people completely isolated and hung out to dry to go broke. Maybe the dragger licences could be extended to the seining fleet which cannot make a living under existing quotas.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked about a lot of things, including the salmon enhancement program on the west coast. I should like to say to the minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, that we need a salmon enhancement program on the east coast. I recently had a conversation with the president of the Bay of Fundy Salmon Fishermen's Association and he told me that when he was a boy he and his father had fished salmon in the Bay of Fundy. As a boy, I knew there was a good opportunity for sportsmen all along the Saint John River Valley. But a low point was reached in the twenties and it was during this period that the Government of Canada undertook an intensive program of the development of fish hatcheries. They built one in the community in which I lived, another one 50 miles north of there, and another 150 miles south. They were scattered over New Brunswick. They were built in Bedford, Nova Scotia, and