

apply to fishing? I am not advancing the argument that we should lift the interest rate under this act or the Farm Improvement Loans Act. I merely put forward the proposition there seems to be a conflict of view on the part of this government with respect to different loans.

On the one hand, the government says lift the ceiling and interest rates will go down. On the other hand, they say they will keep the ceiling on interest rates. As a consequence no help is provided because private institutions will not lend money at the low interest rate. The government should do something which would be of assistance to not only fishermen but farmers as well because they are subjected to the same type of interest structure.

As primary producers, fishermen are one of the few if not the only group in our society that has relatively little or no control over their economic position. They have no control over the prices charged to them for goods and supplies, gasoline, wood and other items used to build a boat. That is determined by someone else. They have little control over the prices paid for the product they catch in so far as the international market is concerned. That is done by a conspiracy under a price fixing arrangement sanctioned under the Combines Investigation Act. He has little control over the prices paid to him by the fishing company in terms of establishing a negotiated price for his fish. This is always difficult to establish.

In the co-operative system, the fisherman has a larger degree of control over the prices he will receive because he owns the production unit. He owns the cannery, the reduction plant and the distribution system emanating from the co-op. All of the so-called profits or surpluses are returned to the fisherman. Apart from that he has relatively little control over his economic position. He is squeezed at the selling price end and at the buying price end.

The government should recognize the primary producer, especially in the fisheries by setting up a government fund under the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act to lend money directly to him, at the interest rate of  $7\frac{1}{4}$  or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent or at a reasonable interest rate. The government has already decided that is a reasonable interest rate and this has been approved by order-in-council. The government should set up this fund to provide money to individuals so that they may finance and advance themselves properly in the fishing industry, or re-finance their position.

### *The Patent Act*

I look forward to the time when we can explore in greater detail and informality the propositions contained in this bill and any amendments put before the committee.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

### THE PATENT ACT

#### AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE AUTHORITY TO MAKE RULES RESPECTING FEES

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (for Mr. Basford)** moved that Bill C-194, to amend the Patent Act, be now read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

**Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview):** When one looks at Bill C-194, one appreciates how innocuous it is. I almost hesitate to speak on this matter. I notice it was introduced by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) in March of this year when Bill C-102, the amendments to the Patent Act concerning drug prices, was passed. During that debate I referred to the minister as the shadow boxing champion of Canada. I did so because at that time the bill did little or nothing to reduce drug prices. I pointed out that the minister had done little or nothing with regard to consumer prices or to the problems of foreign ownership. In addition to those items I have mentioned, he has permitted the slave clauses to remain in professional and amateur sports contracts. He has done nothing to bring the Combines Investigation Act forward for review by this house and for action.

• (9:50 p.m.)

When I read this bill, the purpose of which is to increase the fees with regard to applications for patents, it makes me realize that the Minister has more than earned the title of shadow boxing champion of Canada. Here we have a minister who could do so much in the field of patents. With respect to drugs alone 95 per cent of patents are held by United States companies. There has been a great deal of talk about changing the 17 year rule to a 10 year or 7 year rule in order to break monopolies and reduce the prices of drugs, but this is the feeble effort by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to meet some of these challenging problems. It has really made me stand in my place tonight and repeat to the minister that he is the shadow boxing champion of Canada.