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A FISHERIES EXTENSION PROGRAMME



MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

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Programme #7

FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

On January 10 the Hon. C. M. Lane, Minister of Fisheries for Newfoundland, appeared on our programme and outlined in considerable detail government plans for assisting fisheries development.

As most fishermen will remember, the provincial government appointed a fisheries commission in 1962 that was charged with the responsibility of making recommendations on which a new fishery development policy would be based. This commission finished its work and presented its reports and recommendations during 1963. The report recommended the establishment of a National Fishery Policy which would make capital and assistance available to the fisheries and to fishermen in something of the same manner as assistance has been given to the agricultural industry down through the years. The federal government has spent large sums of money for research and development of the agricultural industry in Canada

but comparatively little has been done to assist the fishing industry.

Early in 1964 the provincial government submitted the report of the fishery commission to the federal government and on December 24, 1964 Premier J. R. Smallwood announced that the federal cabinet had approved the fisheries programme as set out by Newfoundland in January 1964.

In making the announcement, the Premier termed the decision by Ottawa to implement the programme as being "the biggest Christmas present Newfoundland fishermen have ever received." He also described the programme as a "new wave, a new birth" for the Newfoundland fisheries.

The programme as outlined by the Premier consists of fourteen points and it was these points that we asked the Hon. C.M. Lane to comment on during our interview with him on January 10.

(1) The first point outlines the steps to be taken to assist and encourage people living in isolated areas to move to larger

communities. This is referred to as a Centralization Programme. Under this programme the provincial and federal governments will pay 25% and 75% respectively of the cost of the assistance approved for this purpose. It is expected that the cost will approximate \$2,000 for every family moved under the plan.

Mr. Lane pointed out that there are many small communities in the province where it is not economically possible to provide people with a tolerable level of services. People living in such communities, Mr. Lane said, must be encouraged to move to larger and more centralized communities where it is possible to take advantage of modern conveniences and amenities, and where industry has been or will be established. As our offshore fishery is expanded by use of large and modern draggers and trawlers a fairly large number of shore jobs will be created in the towns and communities where fresh fish plants are situated. People moving to these communities will have an opportunity to work either as crew members of trawlers or as plant workers.

Mr. Lane emphasized the fact that the plan is entirely voluntary. There will be no compulsory measures taken to get people to move. He feels, however, that the younger people will want to move and people of the older generation will have little alternative but to move with them.

The government, will, in as far as is possible, assist in providing employment opportunities in communities where people are encouraged and assisted to move.

It is expected that this plan will result in the movement of from 17,000 to 20,000 people in the next few years and will cost in the vicinity of \$12,000,000.

(2) Under point #2 the federal government undertakes to "step up noticeably" its fisheries research and experimentation in Newfoundland. Studies will be conducted to find out whether or not oyster culture might be practiced in certain areas of the province. Studies will also be carried out on Arctic Char, the introduction of Pacific salmon in the province and trout culture. In addition, efforts will

be made to increase our Atlantic salmon stocks to provide an ever increasing return from this valuable fishery.

(3) Point #3 provides for an expansion in federal-provincial cost sharing programmes to encourage boat building and the use of modern fishing gear.

Mr. Lane provided the information that two new types of fishing craft would be built at the Marystown shipyard in 1965, and would be used for experimental fishing when completed. These boats will be equipped with modern fishing aids and if they prove successful, construction plans will be available to fishermen during the next year.

(4) Point #4 provides for boats costing up to \$15,000.00 to be covered under the Fishermen's Indemnity Plan. Previously, boats costing over \$12,500. were not covered under this plan and consequently their owners had to purchase regular marine insurance, the premium for which went as high as \$800.00 for the twelve month period. Under the Fishermen's Indemnity plan boats are insured for 1% of cost. A boat costing up to \$15,000.00 can now be insured for \$150.00 per annum

which saves the fisherman several hundred dollars a year in insurance fees.

In addition to this charge, the federal subsidy has now been made applicable to boats measuring 35' and up. Previously this subsidy only applied to boats 45' and up. The subsidy is now calculated on the basis of 25% of approved costs for boats measuring from 35' to 44' and 30% of cost for boats 45' and up. This approved cost includes the cost of all mechanical and electronic aids installed in the boats.

(5) Point #5 provides for federal insurance plan to cover fishing gear, fixed gear and shore installations. The premium for such insurance will be 1% of cost. In other words a fisherman will be able to insure property valued at \$10,000 for a premium of \$100.00 annually. It should be noted, however, that this insurance is not extended, as yet, to gear actually set in water. So far it covers boats, stages and fishing gear out of water only.

(6 & 7) Points 6 & 7 provide for a number of technical specialists to

work on new fish-catching and processing methods. A permanent liaison officer will be stationed in the province to work with provincial and federal officers engaged in this type of work. Officers of the federal Department of Fisheries will be working closely with the personnel of the College of Fisheries in this field.

(8) Point #8 provides for the federal government to make available to the provincial government money which will be used to make loans to fishermen for the purchase of boats, engines and gear as well as to fish-plant operators for the expansion of processing facilities and the purchase of modern fishing vessels.

Mr. Lane pointed out that the Province, first of all, must make an inventory or listing of the needs in respect of such purposes before this money becomes available.

(9) Point #9 The governments intend to commence construction of a number of salt fish community processing plants and collection centers for fresh fish. No decision on the actual number of these facilities



to be built will be made until the report of the federal Royal Commission on salt fish marketing is received.

(10) Point #10 provides for a working party to be established to study bait problems. An additional 20 bait distribution centers will be built in 1965 either in conjunction with the fresh or salt fish industry.

(11) Point #11 provides for the construction of a dockyard capable of handling ships up to 1000 tons. This will likely be built at Marystown and will cost in the vicinity of 2 million dollars.

(12) Point #12 The Atlantic Development Board has agreed to join in a programme which will provide central water systems to certain fish processing communities. Municipalities wishing to do so will be able to acquire additional supplies of water from these systems.

(13 & 14) Points 13 & 14 provide for studies to be made along the Labrador Coast to ascertain what marine works may be needed for the development of the fisheries in Labrador. This study will be carried out in 1965. In addition, the federal Department of Public Works

and the provincial Department of Fisheries will co-operate in making a study of what is needed around the coast by way of improved marine works and facilities.

Mr. Lane ended the discussion by pointing out that he is optimistic and enthusiastic about the future of the fisheries and can see where many hundreds of Newfoundlanders will be able to make a comfortable living from fishing. He emphasized the fact that we must modernize our catching techniques and use the knowledge available from science and research if we are going to make the fullest possible use of our fishery resources.