

Mr. NEILL: I do not blame the minister, because he is trying to do an impossible thing; he is trying to set dates that will be satisfactory all over the country, which is impossible, because in some districts the ducks or geese have not arrived by the time the open season is ended. I find that last year the open season was from October 17 to December 15. In many places on the west coast of Vancouver island the ducks have not arrived by December 15, so what is the use of an open season that is over before the ducks and geese have arrived?

The remedy I suggest is that the minister take power to do what has been done in many other cases, fix a season which is appropriate to the particular province or the particular district. In connection with fishing, for instance, we have twenty or thirty different dates in British Columbia, so why not leave the matter subject to the control of the provincial government, or at least why not act on the advice of the provincial government? I am quite sure that the province of British Columbia, if left to itself, could fix a couple of seasons, one for the interior and one for the coast, that would be acceptable. The period from October to December is not acceptable. I have under my hand a petition from the gun club centering around Alberni, and also representations from the west coast, wherein they say that if the season must be curtailed for two months, let it be the months of December and January. I hope the minister will look into the matter because, as I have already said, the solution is to have it regulated according to the district.

Mr. CRERAR: I find that there are different periods for different districts in British Columbia, and the representations made by the hon. member so far as the west coast of Vancouver island are concerned, will be considered. I promise that. I think possibly to some degree we may be able to meet his suggestion.

Mrs. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, as the minister knows, we in the Yukon have considerable fault to find with the opening date of the shooting season in the north. We also realize that because of the number of years which it has taken finally to have not only the state governments but the federal government of the United States to sign a treaty with Canada, we have to go slowly in the matter.

The opening of the duck shooting season in the Yukon is August 15. By that time in the large majority of cases our ducks have left the Yukon, as they begin to go south very early in August. The law in the Yukon is administered by the mounted police, and I

must say that they do their very best to make everything comfortable for the few people in the country who bear guns. It took many years of consideration before the United States and Canada could reach the treaty arrangement which was signed in 1916. I believe that later, in 1929, another treaty for a period of ten years was signed.

I deeply regret the fact that the minister feels it incumbent upon him in any way to reduce the amount of money to be allowed for the conservation of game. I do not think any person could imagine anything more horrible than to go through a country denuded of its forests and its game. Canada has kept her treaty to the letter, but I can state truthfully that that has not always been so with respect to many of the states in the union. Our law makers and those who enforce the law have followed hunters closely. We miss a great deal, but at the same time we realize that on the north American continent the conservation of game is necessary.

I well remember hearing my grandfather tell stories about the clouds of passenger pigeons which flew through the air in his day, and about the horrible murder—it could not be described otherwise—of the pigeons which were netted, shot, packed in barrels, and sent to the larger cities in the United States and Canada. In many cases hundreds of thousands of those birds were allowed to rot on the ground or in the barrels.

In the early days, before a treaty had been signed, the birds went to California and were there slaughtered. Ducks and geese were slaughtered by the thousands, and our sportsmen in the north had very little chance of getting game. There was the general idea that from the breeding grounds there would always be millions of birds to fly south, but there came a time when the birds became scarce. It was only the treaty which saved the trumpeter swan, the whooping crane, the eider duck and the wood duck. The treaty saved many of those breeds, and I would urge that the minister do all he can to continue the conservation and to see that the men charged with the enforcement of the law carry it out to the very last word.

As hon. members are aware, there are in Canada a number of sanctuaries. Any person who establishes one should be praised. We need our bird life, both the migratory and the insectivorous birds. Men and women who enjoy being out of doors, who enjoy fishing and a short shooting period, realize that if we are to have such enjoyment for ourselves and for those who will follow us, the law must be enforced. I ask the minister on all opportunities to do all he can to