

## APPENDIX No. 3—

*By the Chairman:*

Q. It has been stated here by a witness that in the transportation of fish from the Maritime Provinces to a central market like Montreal or Ottawa, there is a shrinkage in the weight of fish, if the car in which it travels is not properly chilled, of about 10 or 15 per cent, and that the fish slimes and otherwise deteriorates.—A. Well, I do not think it would be 15 per cent.

Q. Well, it was stated that the shrinkage in weight is 15 per cent, before it gets to Montreal from the time it is taken off the ship.—A. Mr. Chairman, I don't think the Montreal men lose anything, they just re-ship those packages at the original weight.

Q. And the shrinkage is borne by the retailer?—A. Yes, the retailer.

Q. And the consumer, because he has to charge a price which compensates for the shrinkage?—A. Oh yes, but we never figure the shrinkage as very much.

Q. But you do not calculate to lose anything on the business?—A. No, we do not calculate to lose anything.

Q. There is a loss, I suppose, in handling fish in a retail store?—A. Yes, and there is an awful lot in the cutting up of fish. We cut up an awful lot. Sometimes we strike in the halibut that comes from British Columbia what they call a thawing fish. It looks like a nice fish but when you go to cut it it is all mushy and soft and you cannot use it. Sometimes I have seen thrown away probably out of a box of fish, 80 or 90 pounds.

Q. What is the percentage of loss on fish in a retail store which is properly equipped?—A. Oh, I should say, if they are very careful, 10 per cent at certain times of the year. Of course, in the winter there should not be any loss at all, Mr. Chairman, only the waste in cutting up.

Q. There is always a certain amount of fish discarded because it deteriorates before you can get it to the consumer?—A. I will tell you. The fish sometimes come in a very narrow state, you know. That fish we have to sell at a discount.

Q. The present method of transporting fish is not satisfactory, is it?—A. Well, it could be improved a lot.

Q. In what ways, in your judgment, could it be improved?—A. Well, I think that if they boxed the fish with ice and kept it well supplied and had ice along the route, or else if they had a kind of refrigerator compartment in the express car.

Q. Have you received any fish this year which has been forwarded by fast freight in refrigerator cars?—A. No, we have not, Mr. Chairman.

Q. Have you studied the question sufficiently to say whether in your judgment that would obviate the difficulty in the way of getting fish here in proper condition?—A. Of course it would not affect Ottawa so much because there is not the bulk of the trade here which would recompense them sufficiently for the equipping of a car.

Q. Can you say what quantities of fish are sold by the principal retail stores here per week?—A. It would be pretty hard to say.

Q. You could not arrive at any definite figures?—A. No, I could not just say how much there is. There are quite a number of butchers and grocers who get their fish direct.

Q. Are the retail stores properly equipped for preserving fish and preventing it from deteriorating, I mean are they supplied with refrigeration?—A. You mean the fish stores?

Q. Yes?—A. Yes, because the moment we get any fish in the summer time it is all washed and repacked in ice, and that fish is washed again before it is sold, so that the fish is kept on ice all the time.

Q. It is kept on ice, is it not kept in a refrigerator section?—A. Some people when they get their fish, just put a little ice on the boxes and put them down in a cool room. We contend if the fish is taken out and washed and re-iced and put in proper boxes with ice on it, it is better.

Q. What do you think would best tend to increase the popularity of fish as a food?—A. Well, I will tell you what the trouble is in the fish business. We are up against the average cook and housemaid.

MR. MOISE LAPOINTE.