

Supply—Fisheries

on fisheries so we can obtain all the facts and available information. The suggestion that we find other employment for these fishermen does not stand examination. It would be impossible for any government to decide in advance where these ice fields carrying seals will be found, whether they will be off the coast of Labrador, in the area of the Magdalen Islands or off the west coast of Newfoundland. It would be impossible to determine which of the 30,000 fishermen who depend on the gulf of St. Lawrence fishery resources for their livelihood might be affected by any measure of assistance that could be provided by the government in order to compensate them for the loss resulting from an abandonment of this operation. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect the sealing fishery in the gulf of St. Lawrence, as well as other fishery resources. Our scientists claim that an adult seal can consume from 12 to 15 pounds of fish daily, except during whelping and breeding seasons. Considering that 1,250,000 seals were sighted last year on ice floes in the gulf of St. Lawrence, one can imagine the quantity of fish consumed by those seals and how fast they could deplete the fishery resources in the area.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Godin) mentioned the disastrous and tragic situation of the commercial fishermen below Montreal.

I do admit that we have had some reports on the quantity of dead fish found in that section of the St. Lawrence; but that is an exception because, as the hon. member knows, Quebec fisheries fall strictly within provincial jurisdiction. Therefore, when reports reached us, including, for instance, that of the hon. member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Mongrain), we immediately brought them to the attention of the Quebec government.

• (9:20 p.m.)

[English]

The hon. member for Grey North referred to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. I am pleased to advise the hon. member that in this year's estimates there is \$1,870,000 provided for lamprey control in the great lakes. Of that amount the federal government will contribute a total of \$627,000. As the hon. member knows, the number of lampreys in lake Superior has been reduced, since this control operation was commenced, by about 80 per cent. We are now moving into lake Huron. It is too early yet to determine what the results will be, but with the experience we have

[Mr. Robichaud.]

acquired in lake Superior we are convinced in advance that our experiment in lake Huron and other areas of the great lakes will also provide good results. It is too early for me to say what steps will be taken to introduce fish in lake Huron. The hon. member also asked for information regarding sockeye salmon in the great lakes. Rather than giving half an answer right now, I will write the hon. member giving the complete details on our plans in this regard.

The hon. member for Saint John-Albert referred to the pollution of the Saint John river. This was also mentioned by the hon. member for Royal. As hon. members know, there are at the present time two or three main sources of pollution on the Saint John river. We are concerned about those sources of pollution. There is the food plant at Florenceville, in respect of which the Atlantic Development Board has provided a substantial sum of money to correct the existing conditions. Another main source of pollution is the pulp mill at Edmundston. We are now in consultation with the province and the Fraser Company, which is the company concerned, in order to arrive at ways and means of introducing new machinery which will correct the pollution problem in the Saint John river at that particular location. This will require a heavy capital investment, but I hope that with the co-operation of the provincial government it will be possible to initiate this program in the very near future.

The hon. member for Saint John-Albert also referred to our new licensing policy in respect of salmon. There is no new salmon licensing policy in respect of Saint John harbour and the bay of Fundy area. In the harbour proper this matter comes under the harbours board; they decide on the issuing of licences. In the bay outside the harbour it is the responsibility of the federal Department of Fisheries. Licences have always been controlled. There is very little difference in the issuing of licences. However, in the last two or three years salmon fishing has been improving and a larger number of fishermen are applying for licences. I do not have before me the number of new applications we have received this year, but under this policy we try to transfer the licences from those not directly engaged, those who are not bona fide fishermen and do not operate their nets and fishing boats, to new applicants who are qualified. It is the same policy that we apply on the Miramichi. I will be able to supply the hon. member with more detailed information later, but there is no reduction this year in the number of licences