

Supply—Fisheries

municipalities to improve water purification, for I think municipalities have to contribute beyond their means to the cost of water purification.

I shall only give the example of my municipality which has undertaken a sewage disposal project of approximately \$10 million, even though its floating debt reaches about \$20 million. Considering all other commitments to be met shortly, it must be admitted that this is prohibitive. Several other municipalities find themselves in the same situation.

I therefore suggest that the federal government, as well as the provinces, which already provide some help, I admit, should increase their financial assistance to municipalities.

Mr. Chairman, like several other members, I am greatly impressed by the campaign launched, rightly or wrongly, among the public regarding the hunting of seal pups in the gulf of St. Lawrence. I have seen those films myself and I have received, like most of my colleagues, a great deal of literature in this connection. After hearing the minister tell us about the action taken by his department, I think something has been done. As a matter of fact, I might bring up the evidence given by two airmen of my district who go seal hunting every year and who told me that in the past few years conditions have greatly improved. But I read in today's *Gazette* a short article taken from a dispatch of the Reuters news agency. I should like to call the minister's attention to that article and put it on the official record with a constructive aim in view, rather than to criticize the minister and with the intention of helping him perhaps to promote the efforts being made to enhance the good reputation of Canada in foreign countries which take alarm, rightly or wrongly, at this massacre of seals which apparently is not being effected humanely. As reported in today's *Gazette*, the Reuters agency has this to say:

● (4:10 p.m.)

[*English*]

The London based international society for the protection of animals is planning to send a second observer team to Canada to watch sealing operations in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. After observers watched last year's operation it was claimed they had obtained scientific evidence that seal hunters were guilty of an element of cruelty.

[*Translation*]

Then the report must be misleading and perhaps exaggerated or the information communicated to the minister is incomplete, since it is said:

[*English*]

They have obtained scientific evidence.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chairman, even if the report was inaccurate, in order to maintain the reputation of Canada in other countries, I feel that the minister is right in extending the publicity campaign abroad to explain to all the countries interested in what is happening here, that cruel methods used in seal hunting concern us as much as they and that we are trying to improve the situation.

I have personally been impressed by the remarks of the member for Northwest Territories when he said that Eskimos should be brought over to teach seal hunting to our people. I think that it would be useful, because they are born hunters and have been gifted with a natural ability to hunt. It might be that the vast majority of baby sealers in the gulf of St. Lawrence are only commercial slaughterers. Then, perhaps they would have some pointers for them and the suggestion is appropriate.

Mr. Chairman, I shall restrict my remarks to those things, and again what impressed me, as an independent member, is the fact that the discussion was so objective that it appears a tribute to the administration of the present Minister of Fisheries, and I am pleased to point it out.

[*English*]

Mr. Bower: Mr. Chairman, I should like to compliment the Minister of Fisheries on his remarks prefatory to the approval of the estimates which are before this committee. I also wish to add my adherence to what has been said by various members who preceded me, with many of whom I have had the pleasure and honour of serving on the standing committee on fisheries. We made a very thorough study and received excellent co-operation in the committee from the minister's officials during the consideration of the estimates. I am sure the committee of the whole will have no difficulty in approving these estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I represent a riding in Canada which I believe has the highest landed catch value in the whole country. Certainly I do know it is 40 per cent of the value