

Supply—Agriculture

Mr. SINCLAIR (Wellington): I have to attend a religious meeting this afternoon. It will take the minister only a second to answer my question. During the last three or four months over \$8,000,000 worth of butter has come in from New Zealand, and where did it go? The people are buying this butter believing that it is Canadian made, and the Minister of Agriculture knows that and does nothing to stop the practice.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Mr. Chairman, I will endeavour to answer the hon. member's question when I return this afternoon. In the meantime, let me supplement the explanation given by the Minister of Justice for being obliged to leave the committee at this stage. I am going to the experimental farm to assist the Prime Minister in receiving the pilgrims from abroad.

Item stands.

MARINE AND FISHERIES

To provide for an investigation into the life history of the Pacific halibut by the international fishery commission appointed under the Pacific Halibut treaty of 2nd March, 1923, \$31,500.

Hon. P. J. A. CARDIN (Minister of Marine and Fisheries): This item is for the payment of our share of the expenditures in connection with the international fisheries commission.

Mr. McRAE: Might I suggest to the minister that he represent to the commission the fact that our halibut fisheries are not making the progress in reestablishment which we might reasonably expect. I am told that overfishing is still being carried on in the Hecate strait.

Mr. CARDIN: I regret to admit that my hon. friend is practically correct. That condition still exists.

Mr. FRASER: Is it a fact that under the Fisheries Act the minister has power to prohibit and does prohibit the export of salmon from British Columbia?

Mr. CARDIN: We are prohibiting the export of raw salmon, but not of salmon in a canned or cured state.

Mr. FRASER: This is the prohibition of the export of a natural product. Could it not be applied to other products? Why are the fishermen picked out as the only ones whose product cannot be exported? We are asking for some regulation of our wood products in an unmanufactured state. Why are the fishermen picked out as the only producers who are prohibited, under regulations of this government, from the markets of the world?

[Mr. Lapointe.]

Mr. CARDIN: The request of my hon. friend will have to be made to the ministers looking after other departments.

Mr. FRASER: Why does the minister pick out producers under his administration as the only ones in the Dominion of Canada who are subjected to that treatment?

Mr. CARDIN: I confess that I am not in a position to give a complete explanation to my hon. friend as to that. It is rather a complicated issue and I would ask my hon. friend to be kind enough to give me an opportunity to have a statement prepared by my officials in regard to the matter.

Mr. FRASER: I shall be pleased to do that for the minister, but I should like to point this out: my information may be wrong; I am not absolutely certain of it, but I have information which leads me to believe that if the fishermen in British Columbia were allowed to export their fish to the United States, they could get a higher price for their product. Under the regulations of the department they are prohibited from exporting it and consequently they cannot get as high a price for their fish as they could if the market were a local one.

Mr. COOTE: I have always felt that the policy of the government in regard to the salmon industry is almost beyond understanding. We are worried for fear our salmon will become extinct if we do not protect it with very strict regulations regarding the catch. We prohibit the export of raw sockeye salmon, but we go to great pains to make trade treaties with Australia and other countries trying to get very satisfactory arrangements for the export of our canned salmon to them. I have never been able to understand the policy of this country with regard to the salmon industry. On the one hand we are endeavouring to protect it from becoming extinct, so that future Canadians will be able to enjoy this palatable fish. On the other, we are doing our best to negotiate trade treaties which will enable our salmon canners to export this fish to every country in the world.

Mr. WARD: I would like to take this opportunity of saying a word with regard to our western Canada fisheries. A few days ago an hon. member, referring to this department, made a statement to the effect that in all the years he had been in the house he had never known this department to do anything that would assist in turning the fishing industry to any great account. I gather from the remarks of some hon. members that they