

which I expressed in 1937, when I was a member of the other house. At that time I pointed out several major factors which were responsible for the depression of the fishing industry in many sections of the Maritimes. Chief among these factors were the antiquated methods of catching and processing fish and the lack of proper and adequate equipment. I established a comparison between the constant progress of agriculture in its several branches and the stagnation of the fisheries, and pointed out the difference between the assistance and leadership given to the farmer by government bodies and the utter neglect and misery in which fishermen were allowed to wallow. While millions were spent each year by governments for the advancement, development, and rehabilitation of agriculture, and for the education and the protection of farmers and farmers' sons, fishermen continued to be the outcasts, the "poor geezers" who risked their lives on the high seas, at the mercy of winds, storms and wrecks.

Fishermen of the Maritimes justly claimed that something more radical than the mere making of regulations with regard to fishing seasons should be done for the restoration and rehabilitation of the fisheries. As primary food producers, they considered themselves entitled to the same kind of assistance and guidance, educationally and otherwise, as was provided for the farmer. Their contention was that the 1937 set-up of the Department of Fisheries was not in tune with the trend of the times; that the department was not abreast of the changes which the fishing industry in other countries had undergone.

Martime members of the day called for a complete revamping of the Department of Fisheries, so as to give it a set-up comparable to that of agriculture. From a "stand-pat" department of regulation, patrol and conservation, which it had been since confederation, there was urgent need for its transformation into an active, wide-awake department of leadership and education, of initiative, expansion and development in its relation to the several fields of the industry, namely:

1. Production and catch of fish.
2. Collection and storage.
3. Preparing and processing.
4. Distribution and marketing.

These four points were considered in detail, emphasis being laid upon the need for the more modern methods employed all along the line in other countries. I pointed out the urgency—if we were to win the American and the home markets—of breaking away from the traditional products of dry salted fish and pickled cod.

This appeal for leadership, for constructive action and development of the industry, was made in the interest of 20,000 Canadians from the Maritimes—fishermen and their families—and as many more from other sections of Canada, whose bread and butter and very existence depended entirely on such leadership as they themselves could not develop because of their lack of training and abject poverty. They did not want charity; they only asked for light and guidance in their own field of endeavour, such as other countries gave to their fishermen to help them develop their natural talents and their inherited tendencies to live off the sea.

Those of us who lived in the lean years when the Department of Fisheries was influenced by but one man, and when successive ministers could not make a single move without the o.k. of that official, will recall the insuperable objections raised against the slightest suggestion of change in the operation of the department or in the general picture of the fisheries industry. Year after year members from the Maritimes continued to press the claims of the fishermen, but it was not until changes were brought about in the personnel of the department that the government was able to initiate some measure of progress in the department and in the industry. This had to be done piecemeal, a slice at a time, following more or less the method of trial and error, until new personnel could be developed and trained to take care of the innovations.

Beginning in 1938, subsidies were granted for the construction of cold storage plants and frozen bait plants and depots; for several years free bait was distributed in the more distressed areas; with the assistance of federal and provincial grants, a large freezing and processing plant of 150,000 pounds daily capacity was established at Caraquet, in Gloucester county. Each year substantial sums have been voted for co-operative education among the fishermen. Instructors were sent out now and then to show fishermen the latest methods of curing and processing fish, and the preparation of boneless cod, and during winter months short courses were occasionally given in fish processing and canning; immediately after the war the Fisheries Prices Support Act was passed; federal-provincial fisheries conferences have been held at regular intervals to study the problems of the industry, and substantial sums have been set aside by provincial and federal departments to establish a loan fund for the