

Supply—Fisheries

operations, but to abolish the operation is something I cannot accept.

Mr. Herridge: In continuing my remarks, Mr. Chairman, may I say that I appreciate the favourable response of the minister to the representations made to him by numerous organizations and many people in this country. We shall look forward next year to a report on the results of his policy, which he intends to improve upon and to pursue in the near future, with respect to this operation.

I also want to express my support for those who have advocated the need for closer federal-provincial co-operation in the promotion of research and the practice of conservation with respect to commercial and sport fisheries. Several members have dealt with this subject and I support their remarks in that respect. I also think that with respect to sport fishing organizations, which I gather is one aspect of policy which has been rather overlooked, the department should seek greater co-operation between the various sport fishing organizations across Canada in the development and administration of his policy after it has been designed.

When the minister replies I should like him to answer the following question which I have posed to three ministers of fisheries during my 21 years in this house. Could the minister give a clear-cut explanation of the constitutional position with respect to the administration of commercial and sport fishing in Canada? I ask that question at the request of a couple of organizations.

I also want to bring to the attention of the minister a wonderful opportunity for co-operation between the federal and provincial governments in regard to the Columbia River basin and projects to overcome the effect, shall I say, on fishing from the building of the various dams which is taking place at the present time. The fish and wildlife branch of the provincial government of British Columbia conducted an inquiry into this subject and their report clearly indicates that there is going to be very serious damage to sport fishing on the Columbia River. It also indicates there is going to be very serious damage to the redfish population of Kootenay Lake and other species.

When the minister replies later would he inform the committee what degree of co-operation exists between the federal Department of Fisheries and the provincial departments in regard to co-operation generally in the development of policy in the matter of research and utilization of staff to the best

advantage on both governments, and also in regard to the development of programs to promote hatcheries? Lastly, what is being done to co-ordinate the activities of both governments with respect to research, administrative staff and the sharing of expense?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I came into the committee just at the time the minister was speaking on the subject of the seal hunt, and I must say that I am gratified by the information he advanced in connection with the effective action, now being taken to reduce the diabolical cruelties perpetrated within the last few years.

The minister states that the regulations are going to be amended, or re-amended, and when these regulations are passed the cruelties will be reduced to a minimum. I am conscious of the minister's desire to give the assurance that humanitarian practices shall become the rule under the law, but I would remind him of this. He made almost the same speech in so far as sentiment is concerned two years ago and again a year ago. On both occasions he assured the house that the regulations were then of such a nature as to contradict the view expressed by so many that the cruelties were not being eliminated. The assertion that what was taking place was a blot on the name of Canada. I hope that with the submission of these new regulations to the S.P.C.A. and to the other organizations to which he has alluded there will be brought about the assurance under law that what we complained about both two years ago and last year will now fade into history.

I realize the difficulty of imposing regulations that will be completely effective. Certainly the operation of sealing is of a nature and kind that no matter how carefully the regulations are drafted there are bound to be cases of wrongdoing. However, I impress upon the minister, as I did previously that effective, positive action which was then demanded is still demanded. I have spoken with some of those who participated in the hunt last year as observers and they were shocked by what was then regarded as humanitarian. I only hope, now that the minister has recognized there is and has been need for reformation of the rules of conduct governing sealing, that the regulations passed will have teeth in them that will bite, teeth that will be effective. I know he intends to bring that about. His objectivity in that regard has been revealed during the several years that this matter has been brought up. But on each