

the United States, containing the statement that our sockeye fishery is largely non-existent. I challenge that statement, and I suggest that if for no other reason a treaty with a statement so erroneous as that should not be allowed to remain further before the public at Washington.

As to why the treaty was delayed so long at Washington, the reason is very well known and I think it should be stated to this Committee by any person who assumes to deal with the subject. When the first treaty came up there was only one substantial interest in the State of Washington, that was the trap owners, who had the whole thing in their own hands, a very rich prize. There came into prominence immediately afterwards the seiners, with their immensely improved seining apparatus, set out on a scale never before imagined as possible, and proposing to seine off the mouth of the Juan de Fuca strait, so that they would intercept the salmon coming into the Strait and destroy the trap owners' business. The trap owners, realizing that if the seiners were permitted to seine right up to the entrance to the Strait, the supply of fish for the traps would be very much diminished, started a lobby which has been maintained at Washington ever since, to prevent any conclusion of the treaty that would bring such a situation about. The provision which it has been attempted to have placed in the treaty in that connection has been one to extend the operation of this treaty, and the jurisdiction of the proposed commission for fifty miles, I think it is, outside the entrance to the Juan de Fuca Strait—at all events so far out that the seiners could not successfully arrest the schools of salmon making their way into the entrance of Juan de Fuca Strait.

Our only protection at Washington at the present time is that the seiners are determined they will not be shut out from their profitable exploitation, and the trap owners are determined that they will be. As I see it, we are protected at Washington by this want of reconciliation between the two interests, and we have no other protection. If they can ever come together, we will be handing over the control of our fisheries to an international commission for sixteen years.

What would happen to the fishery, to the people who make their livelihood out of this fishery, that is the gill netters? There are, I suppose, 3,000 gill netters resident on the Fraser river, who would be utterly ruined if they were deprived of their right to fish. They have small farms on shore, little gardens and areas where they raise chickens, but their ready money, the money which makes it possible for them to continue in that locality, comes from their fishing. If their livelihood from fishing is taken away, the homes of those 3,000 people will become vacant and worthless, and the people themselves will have to move into the cities where they will add to the numbers of unemployed who are already a big problem there. This will come about because of Article VII, from which I have already quoted, which reads as follows:—

Inasmuch as the purpose of this Convention is to establish for the High Contracting Parties, by their joint effort and expense, a fishery that is now largely non-existent, it is agreed by the High Contracting Parties that they should share equally in the fishery. The Commission shall, consequently, regulate the fishery with a view to allowing, as nearly as may be practicable, an equal portion of the fish that may be caught each year to be taken by the fishermen of each High Contracting Party.

Now, all those fine words are killed by the little sentence "as nearly as may be practicable," because the suggestion is absolutely impracticable. I do not think anyone connected with or outside the Department will attempt to show how effect could be given to that condition, that the trap fishermen of the State of Washington and the gill netters of the province of British Columbia could share equally in the fishery.