

Fisheries Act

of Nova Scotia which is closer to the banks. I want to make it quite clear that I have attended a couple of fishermen's meetings and they know what they are talking about. After all, they have been fishing for many years.

I realize that the Fisheries Research Board has done a tremendous amount of research, and I think we need even more research in other branches of the fishery which must be looked at more closely. For example, we need research into the harvesting of sea urchins. Although these have nothing to do with lobsters, sea urchins are considered a delicacy by Europeans while Canadian fishermen consider them a nuisance. I do not want to criticize the Fisheries Research Board; in fact, I would praise them for the fine work they have done. At the same time, some of their findings are open to challenge. Perhaps the evidence is not conclusive enough. At least, it is not conclusive enough to convince the fishermen.

• (2:40 p.m.)

It is a different matter to experiment with bottles floating on the water or several inches under the surface. We are here dealing with lobster. These people know from experience what they are talking about. They have been fishing for many years, some for as long as 20 and 30 years. Let us suppose these fishermen are right. It is not enough for us to say that we must participate in this fishery. What happens if this fishery is depleted? Can we then say; oh well, it was good while it lasted? We took our share, but now it is all gone. Then, everybody would be out of work. This is the thing that bothers the fishermen and this is why they are concerned. They feel that present research is not conclusive.

Let us consider the herring industry. That industry is very often referred to as an example. The fishermen suggest that if the same research people involved in the herring fishery are making these recommendations they do not want any part of them. Last week the Bay of Fundy was closed to seiners and trawlers because there were not enough fish for everybody. This area lies between my riding and the New Brunswick shore. These fishermen continually ask me what will happen if the research people who are making these recommendations are the same ones who studied the herring fishery.

I was talking to a fellow yesterday who lost \$20,000 on his boat recently. He had to let it go because of the lack of fish. One might say that we have been talking about the herring industry but that these boats could be used

for offshore lobstering. If we use these boats for offshore lobstering we might face the same situation in a few years that we faced in connection the Herring industry. We may deplete this fishery as the herring fishery has been depleted.

If the department is concerned that other nations are going to reap the benefits of our fisheries, then these problems have to be ironed out with the nations concerned. They must not be allowed to deplete our fisheries. The department must make sure that these nations do not fish close to our shores. The fishermen are willing to accept the idea that perhaps lobsters 200 miles away are not a part of their fishery, but they certainly cannot be sure that only those lobsters and not those on their shores will be taken.

The fishermen, through an impressive effort of their own and out of their own pockets, are responsible for a full-page open letter to the Minister of Fisheries which appeared in the leading newspapers of the province of Nova Scotia. In this open letter they have protested certain policies. The letter is addressed to the Hon. Jack Davis, Minister of Fisheries. I am sure no one has seen fishermen undertake such a project for many years, either in the province of Nova Scotia or anywhere else. They are so concerned they have taken the trouble to spend their own money in order to publish this open letter. Let me take a few moments to read part of it. It reads:

Dear Sir: On May 18th, 1970, 910 fishermen, and other interested persons, attended a meeting of the Lobster Bay Fishermen's Association, held at Barrington Passage, Nova Scotia.

The accompanying resolution was passed with no dissenting vote.

On June 1st, 1970, 450 fishermen, and other interested persons, attended a meeting in Wedgeport, Nova Scotia, under the auspices of the Wedgeport Fishermen's Association. The same resolution was adopted, unanimously.

We have never seen so many fishermen get together for a cause as in this particular case. That is why I am so concerned about this. The letter then reads:

Both resolutions were immediately forwarded to your office, at the close of each respective meeting. Since no direct reply from your office has ever been received, we therefore take this means of again calling your attention to a most serious situation resulting from an announcement from your office on May 11th, 1970, giving notice of intent to enact legislation to allow the harvest of lobsters on George's Bank, and other areas, after the closure of the season in District No. 4, on May 31st.

Would you not also agree, Sir, that fishermen everywhere have every right to be concerned, since