

*Supply—Fisheries*

importance of the sport fishery in that area of British Columbia. Certainly we are not underestimating its importance.

The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra referred to Greenland halibut. This is a matter which falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Trade and Commerce and I have already referred it to my colleague, the minister responsible for that department. His officials have taken this matter up with representatives of the appropriate department in Washington.

The hon. member for Kings said he appreciated the co-operation he has received from the department, and he referred particularly to protection of the gear of inshore fishermen which on many occasions is destroyed by draggers operating too close to shore. I am pleased to inform him that within the next few weeks, after full discussions with the provincial governments concerned, it is my intention to introduce certain regulations prohibiting the operation of draggers in limited areas where inshore fishing is prominent. We have every reason to believe that this will afford the type of protection desired.

Unfortunately the hon. member for Kings and I do not agree on the payment of subsidies on fishing vessels of the 35 foot to 45 foot class. Let me assure the hon. member that when this policy was announced there was a press release which was issued after full discussion and agreement with the provincial loan boards in the Atlantic provinces.

That release stated:

During the first few years of operations under the new regulations assistance to vessels under 45 feet in length will be limited to approved experimental designs. The fishermen's loan boards in the provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and the minister of industry and commerce in the province of Quebec, will continue the direct administration of the new regulations. Close control over the design and specifications of craft eligible for assistance will be maintained by federal-provincial co-operation. This will include consideration of the numbers to be built each year, and their location, and the co-ordination of their construction with training projects designed to provide skilled manpower for a modern Atlantic fleet.

I wish to add that regulations were passed by order in council P.C. 1964/8995 covering such agreements reached with the fishermen's loan boards of the provinces.

The hon. member for Halifax referred to assistance to lobster fishermen. I agree there was a heavy loss suffered by lobster fishermen on the Atlantic coast this spring, due to stormy weather and the late opening of the lobster season as a result of the

heavy ice movements. Our policy is not different to that which has been followed for a number of years. On different occasions in the house I have stated that we are prepared to consider assisting any area if the provincial government concerned will make representations to us and declare such losses in those areas as being of disaster proportion. Under those circumstances we would be prepared to consider providing assistance.

In this instance I want to repeat what I said last year, emphasizing that it is unfortunate that lobster fishermen are not taking advantage of the fishermen's indemnity fund. We have a program of insuring their lobster traps and their boats, and in this way protecting them in case of losses such as those which occurred this year. However, it is most unfair for lobster fishermen of a certain area, who do take advantage of this insurance policy, in order to be compensated for losses when other fishermen are not contributing to this insurance policy and are provided with assistance.

Perhaps I should say that the province of Nova Scotia this morning requested the information we have in respect of assessing the amount of loss in the area referred to by the hon. member. I immediately issued instructions to supply the province with this information, and if it is considered by the province that the losses are of disaster proportion I will be prepared to recommend to my colleagues that special attention be given to these claims.

Let me also make it clear that I am asking for the co-operation of the provinces in persuading the fishermen to take advantage of this insurance program. It is there for their protection and the cost is extremely low. When such losses occur the fishermen are compensated for the greater part of their losses.

The hon. member for Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare referred to protection of salmon in the Davis strait area. This matter came up about two years ago, and last year we carried out a tagging experiment in that area in the vicinity of the coast of Greenland to determine what proportion of salmon originating from Canadian rivers are to be found there. We expect to repeat this experiment this year to obtain further information before any further action is taken.

The hon. member for Notre Dame-de-Grâce referred to sealing operations and I have already given my answer in this regard. I certainly will take into consideration his suggestion, also made before in the house, that this matter be referred to the standing committee