

*Supply—Fisheries*

or for a minister of fisheries in the political sense; that we might better approach the whole question of fisheries from the biological or scientific point of view if we did not have a department with a political head, but instead have a board or commission charged with the responsibility of doing things in the most scientific way possible. However, I still wish to indicate on behalf of the many fishermen and people engaged in the fisheries industry their appreciation for the unstinting work and devotion of the people who work in the Department of Fisheries, especially those engaged in the biological field.

The other day I had occasion to come across a book which had recently been published entitled "Politics and Conservation", by one Richard A. Cooley. It is an historical account and analysis of the decline of the Alaskan salmon fishery, which as many people know has gone downhill year after year over the past few years. I highly commend the book to anyone interested in the fisheries of Canada, especially the salmon fishery on the west coast.

Without giving any quotations from the book itself, or any other references to it, I think the experiences of Alaska with respect to their salmon stocks could very easily be repeated, and perhaps in some instances may be being repeated, in the British Columbia salmon industry. This may give us some opportunity to learn by the mistakes of others. I know that with the astuteness of the Department of Fisheries they have knowledge of this work not only in its present form but in the form the various reports took before they were compiled by Mr. Cooley.

The essence of this work is, I think, simply that regardless of the political attachment the government may have to the theory of capitalism or the theory of free enterprise, it would be a most disastrous thing for our fishing industry if that industry were to be operated under the principles of untrammelled free enterprise. This is the experience which the people in the Alaskan salmon industry have had. So, Mr. Chairman, it is vitally important for us to have some control or some regulation over the operations of the fishing industry; for if we did not, within a very short period of time there would be that rapaciousness which is inherent in free enterprisers and we would very soon find our fisheries stocks depleted, our rivers and streams denuded or destroyed as far as fisheries are concerned, and the fishing industry gone downhill.

[Mr. Howard.]

I only mention this, Mr. Chairman, as a prelude to raising a question with regard to conservation. This is the thought which I am sure is uppermost in the minds of everyone in the Department of Fisheries; I am sure it is the guide post which the minister himself follows, namely the necessity of keeping a watchful eye regularly, day after day, on the conservation practices engaged in by the Department of Fisheries, and upon the exploitation practices engaged in by the fishermen or the companies in the industry itself.

We must guarantee that there are fish left for future generations. We must ensure that we only exploit the fisheries resource within the bounds demanded by conservation itself. This does not only involve conservation from our immediate nationalistic point of view; it also involves—and perhaps this is becoming more apparent as each year goes by—conservation from the point of view of international relationships. We are not the only nation engaged in fishing outside our own territorial waters or our own fishing zones, as they are now designated. More and more nations are searching the seas for foodstuffs for their own people, and more and more we are faced with the threat of other countries exploiting the fisheries on the high seas to such an extent that it interferes with the conservation practices which we may engage in at home.

This is one of the directions in which we must look if we are to have an economic, self supporting and progressive fishing industry here in Canada. There is not much point in spending millions upon millions of dollars in order to conserve the fishery ourselves when other nations might be able to steam within a few miles of our shores and exploit that fishery to the fullest extent possible, even to the extent of destroying it entirely.

When the bill to establish the 12 mile fishing zone was before the committee on marine and fisheries, the minister there admitted that the effect of the bill in so far as protecting, for instance, the west coast salmon and halibut was concerned was practically nil, because the fish themselves would not respect or even know about any arbitrarily designated 12 mile fishing zone. Their migration habits are such that they range far outside this line of demarcation; in the case of salmon, many thousands of miles out into the mid-Pacific.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, it is vitally important not to place too much reliance or