

Mr. MacNICOL: You will get an extra piece of pie for that.

Mr. REID: I am not speaking for any favours today.

Mr. MacNICOL: But don't refuse it.

Mr. REID: On occasions I have ordered haddock: it was cod, not haddock, that was served. But in restaurants in Ottawa and Montreal I have been served with varieties of fish which I really could not name. I have ordered haddock, but what I got had no more relation to haddock than a eulachon has to sockeye salmon.

Mr. MAYHEW: Did you ever order sole?

Mr. REID: Yes, I have ordered sole, but I hesitate to order it again, after what I was served. Some check-up should be made in this matter. It is well known that fish is more palatable the closer one gets to the source of production. Efforts will have to be made to have fish brought to inland districts in better form and fresher condition. Some countries are doing that very thing. Only the other day I read that Norway has now established small landing fields along its coastline. Catches of fish, after being frozen, are flown from these locations to the interior cities. Some such step will have to be undertaken in Canada, perhaps not by the fisheries research board, but by the minister's department.

The fisheries research board could do much more than has been done in regards to this. Consider also the smoking of fish. I believe the smoking method was perfected in the maritime provinces over 20 years ago and great credit is due them for that development. But since the smoking process has been perfected, nothing has been done along this line for the past twenty years. Fish were smoked for two purposes, to improve the quality, and to preserve the fish for a certain length of time. Many consumers and many grocers who buy fish still believe that because a fish has been smoked it is preserved for any length of time, and that it can be left indefinitely in the open. Such, Mr. Speaker, is not the case.

Proper smoking is all to the good, because the longer a fish is smoked the longer it keeps, and perhaps the taste also improved. But some firms got tired of using the old smoking methods, and now I understand they give the fish a little whiff of smoke, and then add a lot of paint, in the form of some type of tar product. This, I understand, does not add to the digestibility of the fish. The result of all this is that the consumption of smoked fish in Canada has gone down.

[Mr. Reid.]

Here there is a great field for research work. Fish is one of the finest foods on earth, and fish considered from the standpoint of production and man hours of work, is one of the cheapest sources of proteins. Investigations have been made, where comparisons have been made between pork and fish products. It has been proved beyond peradventure that fish can be produced more cheaply per man hour of labour than can pork.

I want to repeat that we must put across the idea in this country that fish is a necessity, not a substitute food or something to be eaten perhaps on one day in the week. That idea can be put across if we take the proper steps, assisted by the research board, to improve the quality of the product and the methods of preserving. There is a great field in connection with preservation by ice or other methods of freezing. At present there is a world shortage of food and yet before long this country may be faced with a surplus of fish. We consume roughly only 8.5 pounds per capita when we should be eating twice that amount, if not three times as much. If we were we would not be so much concerned about export markets.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is in how long?

Mr. REID: One year.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is really nothing; it should be far more than that.

Mr. REID: One must not be confused with the consumption given sometimes in bulletins that are put out. The figures there refer to the amount of fish when caught and retained in this country for consumption, but I am referring to the edible portion of the fish which is consumed. Some countries consume as much as 75 to 80 pounds per capita and I understand that Denmark and Japan, two of the greatest fish eating countries in the world, consume well over 100 pounds per capita.

Mr. MacNICOL: What is the consumption in the old country?

Mr. REID: I have not the figure for the old country before me but before the war their consumption was far greater than ours. We are one of the smallest fish consuming countries in the world.

There are some matters in this report which I should like now to bring to the attention of the minister. It is my intention to deal only with British Columbia because I have given more attention and study to conditions there than to conditions in the maritimes. I shall leave any criticism or suggestion with reference to that part of the country to hon. members who come from the maritime provinces.