

possible for him to have even a modicum of the information that I have on this subject from a perusal of the documents.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I may be on an equal footing when we meet the experts of the Department in the committee.

Hon. Mr. TAYLOR: I hope we shall both be there to meet them. Such a meeting will be very interesting indeed, and I am sure that if we get a Senate committee on the fishery interests on the Pacific coast it will be very profitable.

I am moved to say this by the accusation that politics prompted the withdrawal of the treaty last year, and that this important industry has consequently been prejudiced by the loss of a season. As I say, politics did not enter into the matter at all, as shown by the fact that the new Government of British Columbia, a Conservative Government, were amongst the warmest advocates of the treaty. The only excuse we can give for them is that they were a very new Government and that not a single member of the Government had ever been brought into contact with fishery problems until they tackled this matter after a month or two in office and sent all sorts of telegrams urging the adoption of last year's treaty. So complete has been the conversion of that Government that they are now equally earnest in urging that we adopt the new and better treaty. We can all realize that a Government new to office, as they were, would be very likely to fall into such a trap.

The most important thing in this treaty, as I see it, is the suggestion that in the future the sockeye fishery of the Fraser River area is to be equally divided between the two Governments. Under present conditions—which are considerably different on each side of the line—it is impossible to carry out that suggestion. From practical experience I know very well that the gentlemen who drew up the treaty did not insert this group of words without discussing and considering what construction might eventually be put upon them. As they read at present in the treaty they are meaningless. No draftsman who wished to make his meaning clear would approve of these words. They are used to conceal, rather than to reveal, the intentions of those who negotiated the treaty. The words are in Article VII, the most important part of the whole treaty, which reads:

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.

I will not burden honourable members by reading the corresponding article in last year's treaty. This article is much less indefinite than the one of the previous year, and indicates clearly what should be the ambition of the Government. The reason that ambition cannot be realized—and I am serious in stating that under present conditions the ambition is impossible of realization—is that on the United States side the sockeye salmon are taken almost solely by means of traps set in the neighbourhood of Point Roberts, at the entrance to the Fraser River. The Americans have a few seiners at work too, and we have a few in the gulf, though not in the river. The seiners, however, are comparatively unimportant. A trap will take as many as 100,000 fish in one day, under favourable circumstances; it is a very efficient means of catching fish. On the Canadian side, however, the Government have always prohibited the use of traps, with a view to protecting the interests of the net fishermen of British Columbia. On the Fraser River the net fishing is done by 2,000 white men and an equal number of Japanese; so the livelihood of 4,000 men is dependent for protection against ruin upon the continuance of the present policy of the prohibition of traps on the Canadian side.

In my opinion—and it is not one that is held by me alone—unless the Canadian method of catching fish is brought into line with the American method, that is, to have traps at the mouth of the Fraser River, the intention of Article VII of the treaty will be absolutely impossible of accomplishment. I am not opposing the treaty; I am heartily in favour of it, even though it has this defect, because I think that on the whole it is a good thing for Canadian interests as well as for the Americans. The difficulty concerning Article VII was clearly brought out before the committee of the other House that went into the subject last year with the departmental officials. The proceedings of that committee were reported verbatim and have been published. They show that the chief official of the Canadian Department of Fisheries was asked how it was proposed to give effect to the intention of Article VII. He frankly stated that he had no idea how that could be brought about, and he sympathized with the commissioners who are to be appointed, because of the difficulty of carrying out the purpose of Article VII.