

*Supply—Fisheries*

river as the Fraser in its day, but the construction of the Bonneville dam, the construction of the Grand Coulee dam and the Libby dam, has greatly reduced the fishery there. We are determined that is not going to happen in British Columbia. We feel, and I think we have proved, that we can have fish and power, that all these power developments can be designed to allow the passage of the fish up the river and the fingerlings down.

Since 1945 our department has come in conflict—I use the word “conflict” but I do not really mean it—with every major industrial concern on the coast of British Columbia except the telephone company over power, over pollution of rivers, over obstruction of rivers, and in every one of these cases we have been able to work out a harmonious solution with one single exception. This case involved one small run of fish up a river where there was a drop of 1,800 feet. We had a look at the power development but there was no practical way of getting the fish up that height. We tried to transplant the small run instead.

But aside from that we have been able to work out a solution to all these problems in British Columbia. Our Fisheries Act does give us that power. If after a dam is completed we find that it interferes with the fishery we can order changes. Actually that is a little late. Out of experience the companies that build these dams generally come to us first and say: What sort of a dam should we build so that we will not have trouble with you afterwards? I am very happy that the government of the province of British Columbia, of which, incidentally, I am not a supporter, passed complementary legislation on this power question at its last session. In this way, before permission is given for the construction of a power dam, provision has to be made to satisfy the fisheries department that the fish will get by. The fishing industry of British Columbia now feels quite a bit safer, and feels that between the two of us we certainly have the power to see that any obstruction to the fisheries that is planned will make provision for saving our fisheries. I hope that the provinces on the east coast that have similar problems will follow this line of introducing complementary legislation.

The last thing about which I want to speak is this matter of international conservation. There is not much point in our trying very hard to conserve our fisheries in our own territorial waters, and build up stocks to make sure that our fishermen are going to have a perpetual harvest, if just offshore on the high seas other nations come in and

ruthlessly exploit these national stocks. Over the years we, and our neighbours to the south, have been pioneers in international co-operation on the high seas. The halibut treaty of 1923 was the first act Canada ever signed by herself. It was the first fisheries act for the high seas ever signed by any country. In 1923 the halibut catch had fallen down to less than 30 million pounds and it took the fishermen of both nations a year to catch it. Following 30 years of international co-operation and control we have doubled the catch, and we catch it in one month.

Last year I told you that there was one weakness about these joint commissions, in my opinion. We have our scientists, industrialists and officers on these commissions, but we have never had a commercial fisherman as a member of these bodies, a man with the practical experience that comes from daily contact with the industry. I said that at the first opportunity I would appoint a fisherman to these commissions. Two opportunities did come. The first was the halibut commission, when I was able to appoint Harold Helland of Prince Rupert, who had been fishing with his own boat for 20 years, as one of our own members on this commission.

Incidentally, I refer to the sockeye salmon commission, the most extraordinarily successful example of international co-operation. When this commission was established the salmon run was just about through, and last year we had the greatest catch on record. All this was brought about by the joint efforts of these governments through this commission, to the mutual profit of our fishermen and their fishermen.

This has been so successful that our fishermen are very anxious we take another stride and establish such a commission for the pink salmon. We have not the same control over the pink salmon which sweep in from the sea and enter Puget sound. The United States fishermen therefore get the first crack at them and our fishermen in the gulf of Georgia then get their crack at the broken schools before they go up the river to spawn. We have never caught more than 5 per cent to 20 per cent of those fish that spawn in our rivers. We have not very big boats on the west coast because most of our fishing is in sheltered waters, but we encouraged some of our big boats to go out and get these fish before they got to the American waters. For the first time in history our fishermen picked up 40 per cent of these fish. We are going to have more boats out there this year, and by the time the fishery is in balance we will be able to