

Brunswick in previous years before the outright ban was introduced.

• (2210)

We have the ironic situation in the north of New Brunswick, the Bay of Chaleur and the mouth of the Restigouche River, where the salmon fishermen are completely restricted on one side of the river while in Quebec they will be furiously fishing for salmon without any ban. I make the contention again, as I did when I asked these questions, that the minister should apply the ban to all the rivers in Quebec or should have negotiated with Quebec and found out where we fit before he banned the rivers in New Brunswick. This also applies to Nova Scotia. There are only two minor rivers there, St. Mary's and Margaree. They could have been banned, in the interest of fairness, as well as those in Newfoundland.

While the minister is answering, if he has time he should mention some other matters that I think have been subject to half-truth and misrepresentation by the minister and his officials. First, there is the matter of consultation with fishermen. At page 1607 of *Hansard*, the second column, the minister said:

—we have been in touch with the fishermen, and the fishermen agree with our approach.

My information from the fishermen is that none of them was approached in the official way which was promised. The minister should either now or later detail the exact times and places when he had consultation with the fishing associations about this full closure. Second, I would like to know what pollution has to do with this business. The minister mentioned that some rivers have more pollution than others. He referred to the pollution of the Saint John River. Frankly, I cannot fit the pollution part in, recognizing there is serious pollution in the Saint John River. I do not understand how a salmon ban will change the pollution in the river.

The third matter that came to my attention the other day is that there is no record of the return of salmon to the rivers in New Brunswick from Greenland. I would like the minister to comment on that. I understand from brochures I have that as late as 1969 and 1970 the department admitted there was not any proof by tagging of the return of salmon from Greenland. There is certainly a record of Atlantic salmon from New Brunswick all over the Atlantic, which are being caught and tagged. However, to my knowledge there is no record of salmon being tagged in Greenland and returned to New Brunswick. It may be an exercise in futility unless we have more facts on that matter.

I hope the minister will bring us up to date on a matter about which I understand negotiations are still continuing. That is the matter of compensation and the fact that in the meeting last Thursday there apparently was an almost direct refusal by the fisheries people, that is, those who represent the unions in Fredericton, New Brunswick, who turned down the compensation that had been offered. I want to give the minister time to refer to as many matters as possible. I point out to the minister that this is unique in the sense that the fishermen have not asked for compensation. They are being told they should

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stop fishing and there will be compensation. There should certainly be a very generous offer to them.

I have been here a long time, too long perhaps, but I do not think I have missed one year in making the suggestion that we have a massive program of study for the salmon. We are now finding that we do not have all the knowledge for this unique fish. I do not know whether the minister or the departmental officials are to blame, but he has to deal with this question on a piecemeal basis each year. First there were restrictions on the passing down of salmon rights. We were told that this would apply only to bona fide fishermen. They made plans on that. The season was then cut down and the fishermen co-operated fully in that regard. Having gone through that whole period of adjustment with their families, what little money they received was completely cut off this year. The possibility of being able to do some fishing is one thing, but they are cut off completely this year. If there is to be compensation, I urge that it be on a generous scale.

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries): I should like to answer the hon. member in this way. We have been looking at the Atlantic salmon situation in terms of the entire east coast, not in terms of the individual provinces. We have been very much concerned about the large salmon, not so much about the smaller salmon commonly referred to as grilse. The principal large salmon rivers are, generally speaking, on the mainland. The best rivers are in New Brunswick and Quebec. I have stated in the House that Quebec is expected to take—indeed, I think I said “will take”—formal action with respect to closure for a period of years at least of the big salmon rivers.

As far as the commercial fishery is concerned, I discussed this matter at length yesterday with the minister responsible for fisheries in Quebec City and after an explanation of our attitude he again said he would endeavour to follow our approach as quickly as he could. A problem could arise if there were not close co-operation with Quebec with respect to those rivers, including the Matapedia and the Restigouche, which flow into the Bay of Chaleur. There must be an identical policy with respect to these rivers because Quebec fishermen are on one bank and New Brunswick fishermen are on the other.

We have offered compensation to New Brunswick commercial fishermen to cover the period during which fishing for salmon will not be allowed and we have proposed to the Quebec government that through the Quebec administration identical offers should be made to the commercial fishermen on the Quebec side of the Restigouche. There I believe there will be an identical policy on both sides of the rivers flowing into the Bay of Chaleur. The hon. member asked about rivers in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I regret to advise the hon. minister that his time has expired.

TRANSPORT—PROPOSED LINKING OF KOOTENAY AND ELK RAILWAY TO U.S. LINE—REQUEST FOR ACTION TO PREVENT MOVEMENT OF COAL TO U.S. PORTS

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, on May 5 I asked a question concerning the proposed linking of the