

*Supply—Fisheries*

of the somewhat glowing pictures from time to time painted for us in Ottawa. To lend credence to this point—and I may not get a completely detailed answer on this matter from the minister at the moment unless he happens to have the information before him—I should like to pinpoint what I have been saying by referring to some impressions I gained during a recent visit to the Quatsino Sound area on the northwest coast of Vancouver Island.

I was rather distressed to be informed—I should like to know whether this is in fact correct—that during last season there was no fisheries inspection officer in that whole area on a continuous and regular basis. Are the minister and his headquarters' officials aware of the kind of reports I get that flagrant violations are being committed by net salmon fishermen of the surf or blue line, which has been a subject of considerable discussion in our marine and fisheries committee?

I should like the minister and the committee to know that I am deeply disturbed by reports I receive about the effects on our fisheries of mine tailings going into the Marble River system, one of the important fishing systems in the Quatsino area. The activities of the mine operated there by Cominco are creating a situation whereby mine tailings are moving down into the spawning areas of that watershed. Then there is the whole question of what happens to spawning gravel because of the infiltration of fine silt, quite apart from what may be the damaging results of chemicals that are intermingled with the mine tailings.

Residents of that area, who in some cases are second and third generation, are gravely concerned about what they have seen happening to some of the runs of the Quatsino area fishery. I remember a number of years ago, for example, raising a question in our discussion about the effects of the kind of pollution being poured in the Neurotsis Inlet of Quatsino Sound from the pulp mill now operated by the Rayonnier Corporation of Canada. There is a highly visible degree of pollution for miles down that inlet, I do not know how far back the records of the fisheries department go in respect of fish runs into the headwaters of Neurotsis Inlet, but I was told quite bluntly at one time that in this situation it was a question of either no pulp mill or no fish, and that there had never been any important runs into that area. Yet people who have been residents of the area since well before the turn of the century tell me that years ago this was a place where the

[Mr. Barnett.]

Indians went in order to catch and smoke their annual harvest of chum fish, and that the chum fishery of that area was at one time of a fairly substantial size. I have also been told that the run of Springs that went into this area was certainly of no mean proportions.

These are the kind of questions that one who is representing a constituency such as mine has to answer, and as the minister knows this area is one of the important fishing regions of Canada. These are the type of problems with which I am faced when out in the field. I want the minister to know that very often when I repeat the answers I have received in Ottawa these answers are greeted, to put it mildly, with considerable scepticism by those who have personal, detailed, first-hand knowledge.

I wish to make it quite clear that I am not accusing the minister or any of his officials of bad faith in the kind of answers they give to the committee. Generally speaking, as I have made clear to the minister and the house before, I have a very high regard for the kind of Canadian citizen who comprise the working force of the federal Department of Fisheries. But I know that people in offices in Ottawa cannot be everywhere, and I believe it behooves those of us who have the responsibility of dealing with complaints across the country to raise questions of this kind because it seems to me that there is a certain amount of error in the kind of information that comes from headquarters in Ottawa on some of these matters.

I know we cannot have a fisheries inspection officer stationed in every bay, cove and inlet on the Pacific coast and that there are people who will deliberately, if given the opportunity, ignore the needs of conservation when they ought to know better. I raise this issue because I think it is the kind of issue that should be raised in committee of supply when we are dealing, as we are, with these estimates following their consideration in a detailed way by the marine and fisheries committee, and after having had some opportunity of cross-checking the answers we have been given in Ottawa with the kind of situations which one encounters in the fishing areas of one's own constituency.

• (12:50 p.m.)

The minister made some reference to the situation regarding the international negotiations with the United States on the Alaska surf line and the boundaries of our fishing waters. If I heard him correctly, he said that