

SEALING SEASON SHORTENED

Mr. H.J. Robichaud, the Minister of Fisheries, announced recently that the legal season for the taking of harp and hooded seals in the "Front" area, off Canada's east coast, would be shortened by five days next year to give further protection to older, breeding seals. He said a recommendation to this effect had been approved a week earlier at the annual meeting in Boston, at the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries.

Canada, Denmark and Norway, the countries involved in sealing in the Northwest Atlantic, are all members of ICNAF. Other recommendations approved by the meeting call for an expanded programme of research on seals in the "Front" area, consideration of additional regulations from both the conservation and humane points of view, and discussions on international inspection and possible joint enforcement procedures.

Mr. Robichaud said that, for a number of years, Canada had urged that the Atlantic seal fishery be brought within ICNAF's sphere of responsibility, and that this had finally been achieved last year. However, he emphasized, even while the formalities in attaining this were under way, the individual countries concerned, particularly Canada and Norway, were carrying out programmes of research as well as studying other aspects of the seal fishery.

The Minister said that the recommendation to terminate the seal fishery next year on April 25, instead of April 30 as in previous years, was an important step in providing additional protection for older seals. Also approved by ICNAF was a recommendation prohibiting the taking of adult seals in whelping patches. Mr. Robichaud pointed out that this prohibition had been observed by Canada, Denmark and Norway for a number of years under a "gentleman's agreement"; in effect, it was now confirmed by the Commission.

Mr. Robichaud added that two other provisions under the "gentleman's agreement" would continue to be observed by the three countries. These consist of a prohibition against the use of helicopters or other aircraft in sealing operations on the "Front" and a requirement that seal pelts be removed from the ice to the base of operations within 24 hours from the day the seals are killed.

RESEARCH PROGRAMME ESSENTIAL

In considering the need for additional regulations, the Minister said, it was imperative that there should first be a thorough and objective programme of research to determine what is required in the way of controls. While a good deal of research on seals has been conducted in the "Front" area, it was felt by the ICNAF panel on sealing that this activity should be expanded. As a result, the Commission approved the recommendation that seal scientists from Canada, Denmark and Norway meet in Hamburg next autumn to consider research requirements and formulate a coordinated programme to provide the data required for determination of population estimates and sustainable yields. At the same time, senior officials of the three countries will meet to give serious consideration to sealing regulations, taking into account both conservation and humane factors, and they will also discuss international inspection as well as possible enforcement procedures.

Mr. Robichaud said that his discussions with the Norwegian representatives were most cordial and promising. Regarding the use of humane methods in taking seals, he added, Norway intended to adopt similar regulations to those of Canada and both countries would co-operate closely in the formulation of these regulations and in their enforcement in the "Front" area.

STUDENTS' HOUSE WING BEGUN

On June 15, Mr. Paul Martin, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, laid the first stone of a new wing of the "Maison Canadienne", which is one of the residences at the famous Cité universitaire in Paris.

Last December, the Canadian Government granted \$500,000 to build the new annex, which, when completed will offer accommodation for 126 students.

In a brief address on this occasion, Mr. Martin observed that the centre "which facilitates the growth of new friendships between Canadian and French students and between Canadians themselves, is also a good place for the development of a better knowledge among the young people of the numerous countries represented in the Cité universitaire.

"There is a universal need to come to this great capital and benefit from the centre of French university life," he declared. "It is a tribute to French

culture, to this indefinable synthesis of intellectual and moral qualities which brings an extra dimension to the life of twentieth-century man...."

The Minister concluded in the following words: "There was a time when the burden of putting into effect ideas such as the one which brought about the creation of this House were left by the governmental authorities to private initiative. That time is over and governments should now contribute financially to the continuation of certain particularly worthy projects. I now have the honour and the pleasure of representing the Federal Government, which wished to associate itself with this work by giving to present and future generations of students a building that will meet present requirements. It is, therefore, a great pleasure for me to lay the first stone of the new wing of the Canadian Students' House, which will enable twice as many students to contribute to a cause that is particularly dear to me, the development of cultural and intellectual ties between France and Canada."