

pleased that the minister has seen fit to propose certain changes in that act; and when we are in the committee stage, or if the bill is sent to the fisheries committee, I may have some further proposals to offer which I believe should be incorporated in the bill.

The step being taken now, by which one of the departmental officials will become a member of the fisheries research board, and the action taken to bring the board more under the direction of the minister himself, I think are all to the good. I can speak with some little experience, because since 1937 I have had the honour to be a member of the international Pacific salmon fisheries commission; and I can tell hon. members that if we had allowed the scientists on that commission to do as they pleased, without any check or instructions and without calling upon them to produce results along certain definite lines, I doubt that the international Pacific salmon fisheries commission would be in the splendid position that it is in today. Anyone who has had to deal with scientists, particularly fisheries scientists, knows very well that individuals of this type are sometimes inclined to spend a lifetime on some form of investigation which, while it may be very interesting to them and other scientists, is of very little value to the industry which is dependent upon research.

I am not going into the history of the research board at this time, nor am I going to criticize the expenditures that have been made, because I have quite a number of more important things to say. The general criticism I offer first of all in regard to the activities of the board is that their investigations have been far too general. The varieties of fish in respect of which research should be carried out are far too numerous, and in my opinion the board has therefore dissipated a great deal of its efforts. However I am going to make one or two comments before dealing with the annual report itself, which I have before me. Let me say again that my remarks today will not be destructive though they may be critical so far as the board is concerned, but will be more by way of suggestion—even if at times what I say may appear to be severe in my criticism.

Although Canada is a great fishing nation, Canadians consume less fish per capita than the people of any other nation. According to the latest statistics the consumption of fish in this country stands at roughly eight and a half pounds per head of population.

We are reaching a time when the fishing industry, looking to the future, is beginning to view with alarm what is going to happen to

the great quantities of fish produced, especially when our export markets begin to diminish. In what I am about to say I am not making any reflection upon the present Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Bridges); indeed I give him credit for the great personal interest he has taken in the industry, and what he has done for its benefit, from one end of Canada to the other. But I must say that if more had been done to have our people consume more fish, and especially during the years of war, when all countries, with the exception of the United States and Canada were short of food, it would have been all to the good, from the standpoint not only of the industry itself but also of the health of the people.

Those who have examined food and food values have made it abundantly clear that there is no more healthful food for the human race than fish. But today in Canada fish is almost in the same position as the egg was some twenty-five or thirty years ago; when one in past years ordered an egg in a restaurant he was always fearful that he might find a chick or something worse inside. The consumption of eggs in those years in Canada went down, and so the Department of Agriculture undertook to improve the quality. While I will not say there was a rebellion, certainly in certain provinces there was amongst some farmers definite opposition to the regulations designed at that time to improve the quality and increase the consumption of eggs. In Canada today fish and fish products are not being ordered by the average housewife, the average citizen and the average family as a necessity, but rather as a substitute. Much more could have been done by the Department of Fisheries, and especially by the fisheries research board, to improve the quality of our fish. I do not know that it is the duty of the fisheries research board to check the varieties of fish offered for sale, but anyone who knows anything at all about fish must realize that in the central provinces, and especially in Ottawa, when he orders a certain kind of fish he is often served with another kind or variety. I am not throwing out any brickbats when I say that I have been in no city where this happens more frequently than it does in the city of Montreal.

Even in the parliamentary restaurant one finds at times the same condition. Far be it from me to criticize the restaurant in this building, because the meals here, to my way of thinking, are splendid and well served. Anyone who is not content with them—well, I do not know what on earth would satisfy him.