

*Supply—Fisheries*

administrative changes, and I should like to refer to two or three that we discussed. Proposal No. 5 has to do with the maximum length of salmon purse seines in areas 19 and 20, Juan de Fuca strait. The proposed change is that the maximum length of salmon purse seines permissible in areas 19 and 20 be extended from 300 fathoms to 350 fathoms.

It was brought to my attention that this would have a serious effect upon the smaller boats engaged in the fishing because the small boats could not carry the length of net suggested here, and therefore would be in a very difficult position in competing with the larger boats that could carry the maximum length of net. It was also suggested in this connection that in view of the attempts constantly being made to conserve fish and the industry it was rather contradictory at this time to suggest that the permissible length of net should be increased. It almost seemed as though it was a contradiction so far as these objectives were concerned. This delegation, therefore, was of the view that this particular change at least should not be made in the fisheries regulations.

With respect to the suggested change regarding the discontinuance of sworn declarations for commercial fishing licences, the change suggested is that commencing January 1, 1958 the affidavit required of every applicant for a commercial fishing licence to the effect that he is a Canadian citizen and that sale of the catch is intended, be abandoned; and that all applicants be required to produce proper proof of Canadian citizenship in order to obtain a licence. The delegation was of the opinion that this regulation should not be discontinued but that teeth should be put into it. It should be enforced, and in that way we could accomplish the purpose for which it had previously been intended.

These are the only two of the amendments to which I shall refer at the present time. With these observations, Mr. Chairman, I believe I will leave the discussion of other problems and factors to my colleagues who will be participating in this debate.

**Mr. Sinclair:** Mr. Chairman, I intend to speak quite briefly on this first item. I am not the spokesman on fisheries for the official opposition. My colleague the hon. member for Charlotte is, and he is particularly well qualified for that post, having been either a commercial fisherman or a fisheries officer all his life. He has covered most of the points which I would normally have covered. I am going to speak rather as a British Columbia member about two phases of fisheries which are of special concern in British Columbia today, questions which have already been

mentioned by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni and the hon. member for Fraser Valley.

The first problem is that of the sale of Canadian fish in the United States. We have had a great deal of discussion this session so far about trade with the United States and the government's proposal to divert 15 per cent of present Canadian purchases from the United States to Great Britain. If there is one industry in Canada which is tremendously dependent on the United States market, and for which no other market of that magnitude exists, it is the fishing industry.

The reasons are quite obvious. We are on the shores of the two greatest fisheries of the world, the north Atlantic and the north Pacific. We have managed our fisheries well, so we still have abundant catches on both coasts. Because of this fact, and our small population, we produce a very great surplus of fish which must find foreign markets. Fish, of course, is an extraordinarily perishable product, so the best markets are those which are closest to the place of catch, and that means either the Canadian domestic market or the United States market. It is for this reason that over 50 per cent of our fisheries products are sold in the United States.

In recent years there has been a clamour in the United States congress for protection against foreign fish, which means principally Canadian fish. The reason is easy to discover. The United States have not managed their fisheries as well as we have, and the fisheries off their own shores have diminished so their fishermen must go greater distances to find the fish they want. They move northerly and fish off our shores. The result is, of course, to increase their costs and they have, too, the increased costs which come from competing for labour in the United States industrial market. We find, as a consequence, that United States senators and congressmen from the New England states have been speaking in congress and have been supported by a very powerful lobby, promoting the idea of quotas and tariffs being imposed on Canadian fish.

Twice such recommendations have gone forward and twice President Eisenhower has vetoed these recommendations that the tariff be raised on Canadian fish and quotas applied. If these recommendations had not been vetoed a crippling blow would have been struck to the fisheries of the Atlantic coast, the great lakes and the prairies, and a very severe blow, not quite as crippling but severe nevertheless, would have been struck to the fisheries of British Columbia.

I was interested in reading *Hansard* this morning to find that the hon. member for