

Supply—Fisheries

New Brunswick. I realize the difficulties these men have to face as officers enforcing regulations in the protective or in the inspection fields, or acting in the markets and economics branch, or in the information and educational services. In discussing briefly these various branches of the fisheries department it is my intention to try to offer what I may call constructive suggestions which I hope the minister will accept with the same good intention and spirit in which they are being suggested.

An estimate of over \$3 million is proposed to take care of the operation and maintenance of the protective branch. The maintaining of officers on land and at sea, the protection of closed seasons, restricted areas, limitation of gear, size limit of fish or shellfish, etc., necessitate large expenditures. We realize that the department has to maintain a well organized and well equipped staff for the enforcement of the Fisheries Act and its regulations. Unfortunately, in limited areas the results obtained are not always as satisfactory as one would expect. There appears to be in certain localities a lack of understanding between enforcing officers and the fishermen. These fishermen are by far the most colourful and courageous primary producers on the North American continent. They are a gallant, independent breed with pride in their heritage and in their profession. They are resourceful, adventurous, staking their all, including their lives, against the elements. They are what we would call a true picture of proud individualism and of free enterprise at its best.

It is essential that the Department of Fisheries, while allowing extensive exploitation of known fish population, must at the same time assure, through protective measures and wise management, the maintenance of production for future generations to come. Unfortunately in the discharge of their duties a small number of enforcing officers are more eager to protect by force and apprehension than by education and a preventive attitude. More efforts should be directed to educating the fisherman and making him understand the purpose and value of existing regulations. Lesser then will become the need of apprehending him and taking him into court for conviction. A fishery officer should be the fisherman's best friend. Better results can be obtained by a fishery officer through a friendly chat at the end of a wharf or even by offering a helping hand than by trying to impose himself as one too self-conscious of his authority.

I was pleased to note the statement made by the Minister of Fisheries when addressing the annual meeting of the fisheries council

[Mr. Robichaud.]

of Canada on April 28 last, as reported in the *Saint John Telegraph-Journal* of April 29. The report reads:

Fisheries minister Sinclair Wednesday said lobster fishing regulations will be more strictly enforced this year. If this and an education program against illegal fishing does not cut down illegal catches, the fisheries department will ask that minimum fines be imposed, he told the annual meeting of the fisheries council of Canada.

It is gratifying to learn from the minister himself that lobster fishing regulations will be more strictly enforced this year. What is most gratifying and encouraging is the statement of the minister that an educational program against illegal fishing will be launched this year in certain localities where illegal fishing has become a common practice. Better public relations and co-operation between fishery officers and the fishermen are a necessity if the conservation service of the department is to prove its effectiveness. Fortunately this unhealthy situation is limited to a very few fishing communities. I feel confident, however, that if an educational and publicity campaign were launched through the public schools in co-operation with provincial or local authorities its results would be most satisfactory.

The fishermen of our fishing communities have been neglected from the point of view of education. The federal government, through its training payments to the provinces for vocational school assistance, could easily work out a program whereby fishing communities could benefit from a practical and efficient training system, as well as from a better understanding of the purpose of existing regulations.

On March 31 last, as mentioned by the minister in his statement this afternoon, the New Brunswick fishery regulations were amended to effect changes in the commercial and angling salmon fishing seasons. Similar changes were made in the other four Atlantic provinces. In an answer to a question I placed before the house on April 7 last, the minister said, as found at page 3855 of *Hansard*:

In recent years a decline in the Atlantic salmon fishery has been giving great concern to both the federal authority and the five Atlantic provinces. On the federal side we have stepped up our research program, have increased predator control and stream clearance and improved our hatcheries. There was also the problem of having uniformity in the length of the fishing seasons, both commercial fishing in the sea and sport fishing on the rivers of the provinces.

On March 1, we had a conference here in Ottawa of deputy ministers from the provinces who met with our officials and discussed and agreed upon a joint program which was taken back to the provinces. I am happy to say we have now received the consent of the five provinces concerned to the introduction of uniform salmon fishing regulations