

Supply—Fisheries

The road map that the fisherman will receive with his licence would serve as a guide to him. In my opinion, that coastguard squad should be increased and should see that the regulations are enforced in those fishing areas reserved for small fishermen. The fisherman who would violate the regulations might lose his permit for a period set by the law.

Finally, it seems important to recommend assistance plans for the construction of fishing boats now in effect. That assistance should be extended in order to include fishing boats 35 feet long instead of 45 feet.

That sector of coastal fishing will grow more important and will certainly be self-supporting, because on the basis I have already mentioned, with a somewhat larger territory, with a wider variety of fishing techniques, fishermen will be able to depend on various kinds of fish instead of limiting themselves to cod.

In that way, the fishermen could secure a much higher income and depend for their livelihood on fishing alone, without resorting to social welfare benefits.

Before resuming my seat, Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries, a question which is inspired by the numerous requests of the fishermen of my constituency.

Those people feel that unemployment insurance benefits coming to them next winter will be nothing but peanuts, because the landings of fish have been 20 per cent smaller than the previous year. One can only too easily understand their worries. Actually, I know families with eight, nine or ten children, who will collect no more than \$20 a week, because their contributions have been smaller than last year.

We have to admit that the fishing industry is riddled with serious problems. Quite a number of fishermen suffer from chronic unemployment, and are incapable of maintaining, without outside help, a decent standard of living.

In the report of the inquiry commission on the Unemployment Insurance Act, the commissioners recommended the following:

That a separate plan be established for the benefit of independent fishermen and that such a plan be more consistent with their situation and their requirements than the general unemployment insurance plan could be, and that the Department of Fisheries be vested with the responsibility of administering that plan.

In conclusion, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Did the officials of the Department of Labour ever meet with those of the Department of Fisheries in connection with that recommendation of the commissioners?

[Mr. Cyr.]

[Text]

Mr. Crouse: Mr. Chairman, I listened with interest to the statement made by the Minister of Fisheries and as the representative of Queens-Lunenburg, a riding in which is located the largest deep sea fishing fleet in North America, I wish to comment briefly on some of the problems relating to the fishing industry. I should first like to congratulate the minister on his appointment to his portfolio. I know that his experience in the house and his prior experience in the fishing industry will serve him well in carrying out his present responsibilities. I also know that as a maritimer he will give careful consideration to all problems pertaining to the fishing industry and especially those pertaining to the Atlantic provinces.

Canada is today the seventh largest fishing nation in the world and the fifth largest trading nation, possessing the world's longest coast line. A few years ago we knew very little about our continental shelf, but as the world's population continues to grow we shall have to look to the sea for increasingly larger amounts of edible protein.

At the present time the fishing industry is in some ways at the stage at which primitive man was many centuries ago. We hunt the fish that nature provides, just as our ancestors hunted animals for food. We have not yet begun to herd fish or improve their quality, but I believe that one day in the not too distant future we shall be forced to farm the sea as we do the land. In order to do this we shall have to give increased emphasis to our oceanographic research. We shall have to study the organic matter dissolved in sea water which activates the whole growth process. After all, on land the strain of cattle has been improved by careful breeding and at the same time the productivity of the soil has been increased by weeding and by fertilizing. It is almost certain that a similar approach to the sea will enable us to harvest a much larger crop of fish, instead of worrying as we do now about protecting our fishing rights from the depredations of fleets from other nations.

We should be able to produce plenty of edible seafood for everybody, if we discover and apply good methods of sea husbandry. A start has already been made along these lines. It was made by the previous administration under the leadership of the former prime minister. An oceanographic institute, the first of its kind in Canada, was opened last year at Bedford basin near Halifax. While this institute was opened under the auspices of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, still it has a branch for the fisheries department. As a result our