

Supply—Fisheries

money is used to assist communities and canneries to modernize their operations and provide the necessary facilities, so that a fresh water supply could be made available to the canneries in order to enable them to meet the requirements specified in the regulations. I have no argument against that because in many instances regulations of this sort, which are made after a cannery has been established and in operation for some time, impose a rather heavy financial burden on any section of the industry, any particular cannery or any community which may be supplying water to the cannery.

However, the bone of contention here is that there is nothing similar in the way of assistance available to the west coast. On the west coast there is no development board which would make this assistance available to communities desirous of providing a fresh water supply to canneries. So in this regard there exists an inequity between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

In the letter which I wrote to the minister I mentioned the distinct possibility that two of the canneries may find it economically impossible to invest the money to put in an extensive water supply system which in one instance involves pumping up hill and the installation of a lengthy pipe line into the cannery area. Because of their inability or lack of desire, perhaps the two go together in some respects, they are seriously contemplating closing two canneries just outside of Prince Rupert, simply because of the requirement contained in the regulations. Even though one of the companies has done some extensive well drilling to see if it could find a source of fresh water close at hand, it has been unable to do so. If the canneries close we will find perhaps that 1,000 native Indian people, for whom work at the cannery is the only source of income during the summer or during the salmon fishing season, will be deprived of work and unable to find work at the other canneries which operate in and around Prince Rupert, and which already have their full complement of workers.

The closing of these canneries will be a serious blow to these areas. One of the canneries on the Pacific coast was in a great deal of difficulty not long ago because, owing to its geographic location, its costs had been higher than that of most other canneries and because it wished to comply with the provisions of the regulations.

I am not pleading for a relaxation of the provisions relating to fresh water and I do not

think anybody in the canning industry is opposed to these regulations, but I am pleading for special consideration, especially in areas where it is not economically feasible for the canners themselves to invest their money in a fresh water supply, or where this would be an unnecessarily heavy financial burden on a community. I plead with the minister to look at this matter seriously. If it is necessary for the Department of Fisheries to provide financial assistance or to lend money to the communities or to the canners, to be repaid over a long period of time, this will not be a new venture because, as we all know, the Department of Fisheries makes grants and subsidies available in other fields.

I see the minister is ready to reply now. I have another question but I will raise it later.

● (9:40 p.m.)

Mr. Robichaud: Under the new fisheries development act there is certainly room to look into this special problem. I want to assure the hon. member that we will be looking into every aspect of the matter.

Mr. Bower: The hon. member for Coast-Capilano this evening raised a point that I too find interesting. As I recall it, the minister did not comment on the point, which had to do with a subsidy for processors for the purchase of dogfish, or greyfish as they are called in Europe. I understand that the fisheries department does have an operation of this kind on the west coast, but in limited form and on a temporary basis. On the east coast the commercial fishing for dogfish could be of great significance but would only come to pass through the initiation of a system of subsidy payments to make it worth while to the fishermen to catch this species of fish. I would very much appreciate it if the minister would take up this question on behalf of the hon. member for Coast-Capilano and myself.

Mr. Noble: Mr. Chairman, the reply I got from the minister gave me the impression that either he did not understand me or I did not make myself clear. I mentioned the splake plantings by the International Great Lakes Fishery Commission and I wanted to know what success they have had. We are aware of the kokanee project, which is a provincial project. We are familiar with the success of that program, but I should like to know about the splake project.

Mr. Robichaud: I explained to the hon. member that I would write to him about this project and give him all the details I had. I do not have them with me at the moment.