

Supply—Fisheries

same sort of help from the government. I suggest to the government that they should introduce an act which would give to fish the same price support as agricultural products now receive. There is no reason why there should not be a guaranteed price and a floor price for fisheries products, just as there is for agricultural products. I submit this recommendation to the minister and to the government.

Recently it has been drawn to my attention, now that unemployment insurance for fishermen is in force, that a difficulty is being experienced in this way. Ordinary contributions made by fishermen, that is, contributions they make in occupations other than fishing, help to qualify fishermen for seasonal benefits, but fishermen's contributions do not count to qualify for ordinary benefits unless there are less than five. It seems to me this is not fair, and is an anomaly that should be corrected. There is no reason why, if contributions that are made by a citizen as a labourer or as a carpenter can count to give him the minimum number of contributions needed to qualify to draw seasonal benefits as a fisherman, a fisherman's contributions should not count to give him the number he requires to qualify for ordinary benefits. I suggest the minister should take this up with his colleague in the Department of Labour and have this anomaly corrected.

The questions I wanted to ask of the minister both deal with benefits for fishermen that were introduced by the Liberal administration. The first question relates to the Fishermen's Equipment Loans Act. I should like to know what results that act has produced, and whether loans in appreciable quantities have been made to fishermen under it? The reason I ask is that the last time I spoke on the estimates of the fisheries department I suggested that the minimum cash payments were too high. The minimum cash payment a fisherman has to make on new equipment is 30 per cent, and the minimum cash payment on old equipment is 40 per cent. The fishermen of my constituency have complained to me that this does not help much because they can find merchants who are willing to sell them this equipment if the fishermen are willing to put up 30 per cent or 40 per cent. It seems to me that in order to make this act of use to the fishermen this percentage should be reduced.

I should like to know how many fishermen, and what percentage of the fishermen who fish for lobsters, have taken advantage of the lobster trap insurance introduced by the previous government? I have a few other questions, but I shall ask them on the individual items when they come up.

[Mr. Cannon.]

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the two members who spoke last for their congratulations to me; whether or not they are merited is a matter of opinion, but I appreciate them in any case.

May I deal with the last questions first? The hon. member for Iles-de-la-Madeleine asked first about unemployment insurance for fishermen. This insurance is administered by the Minister of Labour, and I will bring this matter to his attention. I might say, though, there is a meeting scheduled for next month between the unemployment insurance commission and representatives of the industry to iron out anomalies in the regulations, now that some experience has been had with fishermen under that act.

The fishermen's improvement loans act is administered by the Minister of Finance, and I think the hon. member will find the information he was requesting in an answer that was given by the minister on December 21 and reported on page 2761 of *Hansard*.

With regard to the fisherman's indemnity plan for lobster traps, may I say that up to November 30—I do not have the numbers; these statistics are in value because the traps are all of different sizes and different values in different areas—in Newfoundland the net premiums amounted to \$8,611.66 and claims paid amounted to \$25,000; Nova Scotia, premiums amounted to \$38,007.06, and claims to \$120,000 in round figures; New Brunswick, net premiums, \$575.50 and claims \$999.75; Prince Edward Island, the premiums were \$6,932.31 and claims amounted to \$21,271; Quebec, premiums, \$8,170.20 and claims paid out were \$12,863.85. The total for the Atlantic coast in so far as premiums are concerned amounted to \$62,000—this is in round figures—and the claims amounted to \$180,000. There was a net operating loss of \$118,289.62.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, while I naturally take an interest in fisheries I represent a riding which is particularly interested in sports fishing and where the famous Kamloops trout are found in considerable numbers in the Kootenay, Arrow and Slocan lakes and other lakes often reaching the size of 25 pounds. I am very glad to hear the minister say that his department is taking some interest in sports fishing.

However, on this occasion I rise to do two things. Firstly I am very pleased to congratulate the minister on his appointment and upon the industry he has shown since he has occupied his position and, secondly, I would like to extend to him the thanks of one of my constituents for a very unusual service recently performed by the minister. One of my constituents—a pioneer constituent—who formerly lived in the east has