

the spirit of the first paragraph of the report, and are certainly not helping the industry by putting on that sales tax.

With respect to coverings, I do not know what the minister was thinking of when he permitted, at least without any strenuous objection—perhaps he did object to some extent—a tax on the coverings, articles which in themselves are free of the sales tax, and on barrels, butts, boxes and everything used in connection with the packing of fish. Here again there is only one man who pays, and that is the fisherman, because the people who supply the boxes say that if they have to pay the sales tax the man who supplies the raw material must have the deduction made. Again, it is done in the same lefthanded fashion. No direct charge against the fisherman is made, but just as before, the reduction in the price of fish comes a little earlier. There again, you cannot possibly make a case for the reduction of the tax, because you do not know how much is exported. The man who actually produces the fish and pays the tax is probably not the man who exports at all, and therefore he cannot get his money back. I know of little industries, all over the western shore particularly, where the men, with their families, in little outhouses, put up a certain amount of dried or boneless fish, as it is called. They may sell it in the domestic market, or possibly to a jobber. How will these people get the rebate on coverings in connection with exports? It is merely an additional tax on this basic industry, and while it does not come within the recommendation of the Cockfield-Brown report, which says that you shall refrain from putting a special tax on the industry, at the same time it contravenes that report to this extent, that it imposes on the industry a tax which up to the present time it has not had to bear. I submit that it is in direct contravention of the principle which we are all trying to establish, namely, assistance to this basic industry.

I spoke of boneless fish. That is boxed. But so are haddies and fillets. Some of these come to this market up here, but many of them do not. Often round fish are boxed and iced. You will never get a rebate of these taxes and, as I say, the fisherman is going to pay. I submit that the minister would be well advised to take up with his colleagues in cabinet this matter of the sales tax, which is of so much importance to the fishing industry.

Further with regard to the sales tax provisions, I find that on one article of fishermen's gear which was apparently considered as exempt, the tax has never been attempted

to be enforced until this government came into power. I am not suggesting that the wording of the schedule is such that the department is not justified if they construe the wording strictly in imposing the tax; but, trawl kegs, which are buoys used for the purpose of keeping up trawls, were never taxed before; they were regarded as part of the gear of the fisherman and exempt. Last year trawl kegs had a sales tax, a very heavy item, imposed upon them. I know some men in the cooperage business who are engaged in making trawl kegs, and one of them has had to pay on the kegs not only for last year but for previous years as well. Again, the burden is passed on to the fisherman, and this contravenes the intent of the exemption schedule to the sales tax, which provides, or at any rate is supposed to provide, that gear used in connection with the fishing industry shall be free of the tax. This is a matter to which I wish to direct the attention of the Minister of Fisheries and of the Minister of Finance. I have already brought it to the attention of the Minister of National Revenue and pleaded for some amelioration of the present situation.

The hon. member for Antigonish-Guysborough and I do not agree on some things in connection with the fisheries; naturally, as regards the length of season in our respective constituencies, we differ. He got a fifteen-day extension to the first part of his season, and I had fifteen days cut off the latter part of mine.

Mr. RHODES: Plus six weeks.

Mr. RALSTON: That was a special relief season in December and January. Guysborough got a continuous season, having fifteen days added in the spring of the year when the catching is good, without having to outfit twice, whereas the western shore got a split season, having to outfit twice, and that extra season in the most inclement part of the year.

With regard to halibut, reference has been made to Newfoundland fish. Here is another case in which the Minister of Fisheries would be well advised to give direct attention to the situation with regard to fish coming from that dominion. Last year I protested against fish from Newfoundland being made exempt from the special one per cent excise tax. I considered that this was an extra tax which Newfoundland fish should bear the same as the others. This year I protest more vigorously still against Newfoundland fish being exempt from the three per cent excise tax, and I hold in my hand a telegram which I received