

*Adjournment Debate*

more precise. There is no doubt that this is a much better code than the one used in the United States or in Britain.

I was interested in the remarks of the hon. member when he referred to the label system. This is something that we could look at to see what could be done, although I would like to remind the hon. member that we will be writing every Canadian to give him his code and give him some labels that he could use to put on his telephone or to send to his friends. The response so far has shown that we are on the right track. We hope the public will understand that by using this code we will be able to provide them with a better service. We do not think this system will be unsuccessful. Quite the contrary, we feel that in the long term we will save money and we will give Canadians what they want, namely, a better postal service.

FISHERIES—LOBSTER FISHERY—REQUEST FOR  
STATEMENT ON REVIEW OF EFFECT OF OFFSHORE ON  
INSHORE FISHING

**Mr. Charles E. Haliburton (South Western Nova):** Mr. Speaker, this evening I wish to raise in this brief period a subject which is of great interest and concern to lobster fishermen in the area of South Western Nova. That area has 2,500 or 3,000 men engaged in the lobster fishery. They have their organization, the Southwest Nova Scotia Lobstermen's Association, which had an undertaking from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in the summer of 1971 that a study would be undertaken by the Department of Fisheries in order to determine what detrimental effect the fishing of lobsters in offshore areas might have on the inshore lobster fishery. I raised that question with the Prime Minister in the House a few weeks ago but had no answer from him; so I raise it again this evening.

• (2220)

The impact of an extensive fishery in the offshore area, being undertaken not only by our Canadian fishermen but by fishermen of foreign fleets, is of grave concern. It is understood that the Russians are taking lobsters in their drags, unhampered, and that the Japanese fleet is fishing precisely for lobsters, because they have developed some very sophisticated equipment to take lobster off George's Bank and the Grand Banks. They freeze them, carry them to St. Pierre and Miquelon, where they make use of warehouse facilities, and then the lobsters are transhipped to Japan. One question I would like to ask the minister is whether his department of the government of Canada is concerned with that trade, whether they have any way of determining what volume it is and thereby determining what value and what is the result to our fishing resources.

It is also a matter of concern that control over lobster fishing has not been brought under the ICNAF arrangements; accordingly there is no international way in which the fishing of lobsters offshore can be controlled. This is vitally important to a segment of the population in south-western Nova Scotia and it is a question that it behoves the Department of Fisheries to investigate, just as the Prime Minister undertook that it would be investigated.

It seems to me that the Department of the Environment should determine the volume of lobsters being taken by foreign fleets in these areas and should investigate the fishing techniques being employed by these fleets. It also seems to me that the department must determine the volume and efficiency of the domestic offshore fishery and that a definite appraisal must be made of the relationship between offshore lobsters and inshore lobsters.

This is an industry that means some \$20 million to the fishermen in my area. The fishermen's view is that the inshore stocks cannot possibly account for the replenishment that takes place from year to year, and that the volume of sprat to be found in our inshore areas could not be accounted for by mother lobsters in that area. They also say that lobsters are known to move many miles in a 12-month period; that inshore stocks can be exhausted in a 12-month period and are replaced by lobsters from some extraneous source.

I suggest it is incumbent on the minister and the department to make a definite determination of where the seed lobsters for the inshore areas come from. If it is not possible to determine absolutely that there is no connection with offshore lobsters, then it seems to me the only proper thing should be a presumption to be made by the department that there is in fact a connection and that inshore lobster stock should be protected by very careful control over the offshore fishery, whether it be international control or Canadian control.

I might add that to my knowledge fishery scientists so far indicate that they are doubtful of any connection between the two species of lobsters, the inshore and the offshore. But that is not a good enough answer for that industry. It is not a good enough answer for people who are interested in the future of a Canadian industry, who are interested in what has been a Canadian industry. It is not good enough for people who are interested in Canada exercising and taking the available resources which are within an area which has always been thought of as Canadian from a nationalistic point of view.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the hon. member arrived quite late and the representative of the government who was to answer his question had to leave the House.

In any event, I am very happy to tell him, on behalf of the government, that to my mind the problem is very important. I listened closely to the remarks of the hon. member and I can assure him that the Department of the Environment, which is also responsible for Canadian fisheries, is watching the situation very closely.

Personally, I am sure that all Canadians are very proud of the quality of the Canadian lobster; we want to preserve that extremely important industry. Not only is the lobster catch important to the fishermen themselves; it is also important to all Canadians and in particular to the government and the responsible department.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.