

a Bill for the purpose of amending the section which I have just read. That Bill, I think, passed the House of Commons, but was defeated in the Senate. It is unnecessary for me to state the provisions of that Bill inasmuch as it did not become law. There was apparently a great deal of opposition in the eastern provinces, which alone are interested in the lobster canning industry, to the provisions of the Bill which was introduced last year. Since the close of the last session of Parliament, a conference was held during the summer of 1918 at Halifax. That conference was, I believe, quite representative of all those interested in the lobster canning business, and a conclusion was reached by those interested, and the fishermen, or producers of the lobsters. The conclusions arrived at are embodied in this resolution. The Bill, which I shall introduce on the passage of this resolution, provides:

There shall be four sizes of cans for canning lobsters. The cans of each size shall always contain not less than 3 ounces avoirdupois, 6 ounces avoirdupois, 9 ounces avoirdupois, and 12 ounces avoirdupois respectively, of dry lobster meat.

No other size of can shall be used for packing lobsters without first obtaining the written permission of the minister. Such written permission shall state the minimum amount of dry lobster meat that is to be packed in each size of can so authorized.

That will give to the committee substantially the purpose of the legislation which will be founded upon this resolution. After the Bill is printed, hon. gentlemen will perhaps find the proposed measure much easier to understand, and it will remain upon the Order Paper for some time yet, at least until the return of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries to the House.

Mr. COPP: I understand that in 1907 an Act was passed making regulations in regard to the weight of lobster meat to be packed in each of the different sized cans used in packing lobsters. That Act was amended in 1917, and I think the weights were increased. The matter was discussed by a special committee of which I was a member. We recommended that the weights be 14 ounces, 10½ ounces, 7 ounces and 3 ounces respectively, as contained in the Act of 1917. Does this resolution purpose bringing the weights back to what were provided in the Act of 1907?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I think my hon. friend is substantially correct. At least, it reduces the weight of lobster meat in each can as compared with the weights provided for in the Statute of 1917 as originally introduced.

[Mr. A. K. Maclean.]

Mr. COPP: Does it bring the weights back to the same as provided for in the Act of 1907?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I have not that Statute before me just at the moment, but I think my hon. friend is right.

Mr. COPP: The minister says that there was held in the city of Halifax a meeting of those interested in the packing of lobsters as well as the fishermen. I do not see how the fishermen are interested because they sell their catch to the canners at so much a pound, and then the canners pack the lobsters into cans and the minimum amounts in the different cans are provided by Statute. I remember very well that, during the discussion before the committee in 1917, a great deal of evidence was adduced to show that, as regards the lobsters which were packed by the different lobster packers throughout the Maritime provinces and which were placed on the market, the consumer was paying for a pound of lobsters, but was getting only twelve or thirteen ounces. The committee, from the evidence adduced before them, came to the conclusion that the consumer was not being fairly treated in the matter, and they made the recommendations which are contained in the Act of 1917. We should have some very good reason before consenting to reduce the weight of the can which is supposed to contain one pound of lobster meat from fourteen ounces to twelve ounces.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: No. We want some explanation on that point. It is quite true that there was a meeting of canners in Halifax, but the consumer was not represented; and if it is proposed to reduce the quantity from fourteen ounces to twelve ounces and require the consumer to pay for a can of lobster the same price that he was paying before, I am opposed to this resolution and would like to have from the minister some explanation as to why this change is being made.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Apparently one of the reasons which induced the members present at that conference to arrive at this conclusion, was that they were endeavouring to ascertain and declare the exact content of the cans now used by lobster packers. That seems to have been the principal reason for the change. As I said before, I am putting this resolution forward just one step, as I want to get the Bill printed so that hon. gentlemen may have an opportu-