

Fisheries

One area has not been spelled out in the legislation and probably it cannot be. I am referring to research into various types of fishing and fish products. We do not know whether the effects of the legislation will spill over and affect research into the production of worth-while species of fish and good fish husbandry. In any event, no doubt the board will have some interest in this matter and will investigate the possibilities with the appropriate provincial authorities.

There is also the matter of pooling to consider, which is of considerable interest to my area. As I mentioned before, some lakes yield mainly coarse types of fish while others yield mainly good quality fish. It is important for us to have good quality catches and to preserve fish during transportation for processing purposes. I want to know whether fishermen catching high-grade fish will be rewarded by higher prices than those paid to fishermen who do not care so much about the quality of their catches and produce lower grades of fish. This will be an important problem and I believe the board may have considerable difficulty with regard to it.

The matter of transportation must also be considered. Will fishermen residing close to centres of consumption have a transportation advantage over fishermen not residing close to such centres? We must also consider the subject of compensation for processors of fish whose facilities will become redundant. The legislation on this point is obscure. I understand that the provinces are to be involved in this matter, with the corporation reimbursing the provinces. Very likely a number of companies, by no means all of them large, will find that their fish sheds and warehouses have become redundant. Although the legislation on this point seems obscure, I take it the corporation will reimburse them in some way. In any event this ought to be looked into. If there is to be compensation I should like to see wording in the bill setting out who is responsible for determining compensation as well as what that compensation will be. Also we ought to set up some type of appeal board or appeal mechanism in case some people feel they have not been adequately compensated.

Finally, I point out that in 1964 the freshwater fishing industry brought a return to the fishermen engaged in it of approximately \$12 million, which is considered to be between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of the total amount of money received for the fish caught by them in that year. Approximately 6,000 to 7,000 fishermen will come under this legislation. The price of fish is not rising and the

[Mr. Ritchie.]

catches do not seem to be any greater. There is a big problem here in that a total income of \$12 million for 7,000 people means that each fisherman receives less than \$2,000 a season for his work, or less than the minimum wage. Further, the fisherman has to deduct from that amount his expenses, which are not unsubstantial. So it is obvious that this is an industry in which the participants are operating at a very low level.

● (4:20 p.m.)

The proposed corporation is a very expensive looking set-up and to my mind it is doubtful that it will be able to conduct its business in a businesslike manner and be self-sustaining, at least in the initial stages. I believe that an ARDA type program may have to be instituted for many of these fishermen under which they can be upgraded to obtain a higher income, and some may have to be assisted to go into other occupations.

I am most interested in this bill. Although it does not deal with a large segment of our population it is interesting in that it deals with a perishable food product, and the history of marketing boards for such products has not always been the best.

Mr. Melvin McQuaid (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, to the extent that this proposed legislation attempts to carry out the very lofty aims set out in clause 23 I would certainly go along with it. That clause says it will be the aim of the proposed corporation to improve the lot of fishermen by:

- (a) marketing fish in an orderly manner;
- (b) increasing returns to fishermen; and
- (c) promoting international markets for... fish.

These are indeed lofty ideals, I say to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) and to the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Lang), who is piloting this bill through the house, that if they are successful in carrying out these ideals I for one will certainly be prepared to sing their praises loud and long. Also, to the extent that the legislation proposes to improve the economic position of freshwater fishermen and gives recognition to the importance and value of marketing boards I am prepared to go along with it.

There is certainly need today for improved methods and practices in the marketing of fish and fish products. Through no fault of their own our fishermen have seen their cash incomes slump from year to year. For as long as I can remember fishermen in all parts of Canada have been at the mercy of fluctuating