

Supply—Fisheries

tackle and are guilty of offences that are termed as acts of piracy in some places.

Mr. Chairman, most commercial fishermen of the Gaspé peninsula, namely about 85 per cent, are inshore fishermen who operate in a strip, a few miles wide, along the coast of the Gaspé peninsula. Their fishing trips last only a day; they start very early in the morning and come back around noon. In addition, their fishing season lasts only six months a year, and it is also necessary to take into account the days lost as a result of bad weather.

The main species of fish taken is the ground fish, among which cod is the most common. And there seems to exist in my constituency a long term trend towards decrease in the fishing volume and in the number of fishermen.

But this year, at least at the beginning of the season, the number of small fishermen increased in the Gaspé peninsula, because of a certain stagnation in the field of employment.

Unfortunately, so far, the quantities of landed cod have been 20 per cent smaller than last year, a factor which certainly will not encourage newcomers to become full time fishermen.

Even if we take into account the natural fluctuations which cause the catches to vary, we still have to admit that in that area the fish stock diminishes, and that the size of the fish seems to be shrinking.

We are confronted with unmistakable signs of over-exploitation of stocks, and the culprits are not exclusively the 60 to 65 feet long trawlers which operate along the Quebec coast, or in the maritime provinces, and more particularly in New Brunswick.

It seems that foreign boats operating inside the gulf of St. Lawrence have a direct influence. Figures have been mentioned in respect to the catch of those foreign boats, and they were about 100 million pounds per year. It is impossible to get more details on that matter, indeed it is rather difficult to compile accurate data, since those boats from various countries do not submit reports on their activities.

As I said, Mr. Chairman, in the gulf of St. Lawrence only, foreign boats took over 100 million pounds of cod, according to a report published by the d.b.s. Now, in 1962, the cod catch in eastern Canada, including Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, amounted to 585,643,000 pounds. And in the Gaspé area only, in the gulf of St. Lawrence, foreign boats have caught a hundred million pounds of cod a year.

In view of this situation, I am of the opinion that it is urgent that the 12-mile limit be put into effect; this should close completely the gulf of St. Lawrence to foreign boats.

Moreover, we must consider that the fish population of the gulf of St. Lawrence is the same as in the northwest Atlantic, on the banks of Newfoundland, on the banks of Nova Scotia and on the north coast as far as Greenland.

Let us come back to the gulf of St. Lawrence and the Chaleur bay, where stocks of fish have been replenished. Coastal fishing should be extended to other areas, and I wish to mention now as an example the island of Anticosti for the fishermen of the north coast of the Gaspé peninsula. If coastal fishing was thus extended, more intensive research should be done in order to vary fishing techniques and design suitable boats, such as trawlers.

We should aim for diversified ways of catching fish and try to add new techniques to the existing ones. It would be necessary also to step up research to find out the extent of our resources; there are ways to catch other kinds of fish besides ground fish like cod. In the area of Anticosti island—I will use it again as an example; it is a high point because of the possibilities it offers—there are banks of shrimp, lobster, scallops, crab and other fish like halibut, which have another commercial value and are far from being used in full.

To round up the research work that needs to be done, it would also be advisable to have the research board draw up fishing maps giving indications on the nature of the fish banks, on the movement of water caused by tides or currents, which would determine the fishing conditions in the area.

Mr. Chairman, I am coming to the reason for those explanations. Those maps will have to show also the areas reserved for inshore fishing.

I understand the situation with regard to the federal jurisdiction on fisheries, and that of Quebec as well as of New Brunswick as regards those interprovincial limits is somewhat confused, but the Minister of Fisheries said last summer, in the Magdalen islands, that an investigation is being carried out with the help of experts from Ottawa, Quebec and Fredericton, and personally, I hope that a settlement will be reached in the spring of 1964 so that a strip of a few miles may be reserved for inshore fishermen or private fishing on a small scale.

I even suggest—I admit that would be something new—that a license or permit costing \$1 or \$2 be required from fishermen so that they might enjoy some privileges and be obliged to follow some regulations.