

I have a few notes before me, but I do not intend to make a speech. I only wish to take this opportunity to make a few remarks on behalf of my province and the people I have the honour to represent. The Speech from the Throne will no doubt be debated at some length, but I wish at this time to bring to the attention of the government and the people of this country the needs of those engaged in the fishing industry in Nova Scotia.

**Hon. Mr. Duff:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Mr. Comeau:** The honourable senator from Queen's-Lunenburg (Hon. Mr. Kinley) has just brought to your attention a heroic rescue at sea, as described in the morning press. At the risk of using an unparliamentary expression, I would say that he stole part of my speech. But I am pleased that he referred to the article, because it draws attention to the terrific difficulties with which the fishermen of Nova Scotia must contend. Perhaps the honourable senators from Ontario, part of Quebec and the western provinces do not all appreciate the problems of the fishermen in the Maritime provinces. I commend the government for the wise regulations adopted to assist the fishing industry in the Maritimes and in other parts of Canada. Provision has been recently made for the grading of fish products before they leave the plant. This is a protection to the consumer, and it helps the fish dealer who is attempting to put a good product on the market.

In certain parts of the south shore of the province of Nova Scotia there are natural harbours. That statement applies, for instance, to the counties represented by my honourable friends the leader of the government (Hon. Mr. Robertson) and the honourable senator from Queen's-Lunenburg (Hon. Mr. Kinley). But the shoreline of the county which for a few years I have had the honour to represent is very bleak. We are greatly handicapped through having no natural harbours, and some of our breakwaters are falling to pieces. During the war our fishermen were told, and properly so, that every dollar was needed to buy ammunition, to build vessels, and to supply the needs of the boys in the army, the navy and the air force, and that nothing could be done by way of public works. But now the war is over, and I must tell the leader of the government in this house that the people of my district expect immediate action. I have already tackled our representative in the other place, the honourable member for Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare, and I am sure that he will help me to obtain relief for these people. Breakwaters will serve not only our fishermen but our shipbuilding plants, of which we have a few along that shore, because if they have no breakwater, they are

greatly handicapped when they launch a vessel. For instance, at Meteghan river, where there is a shipbuilding plant which employs quite a number of men, the breakwater is all gone, and I fear that if something is not done in the very near future the shipyard itself will be washed away by the sea.

I am sure all of us favour the decision of the United States and Canada, of which we have read in the press, to co-operate in the defence of North America.

It is the fervent hope of the people of the Maritimes that the reciprocity which we might have had in 1911 will be accorded us in the near future. It would in part solve our problems. Last year a sardine cannery, the first to be established in Nova Scotia, was started near my home. Unfortunately the enterprise is greatly handicapped by lack of suitable wharf accommodation. In the Bay of Fundy and in St. Mary Bay the tides are extremely high; and sometimes at low tide, because the breakwater is broken down, and gravel is piled up five or six feet high, creating a wall, the sardine boats have to wait five or six hours for high tide before they can go over it. As honourable senators know, the sooner sardines are put in cans after they come out of the fish traps or the wires the more palatable they are, because any kind of fish—unlike whisky—does not improve with age.

In the present state of world affairs, we have reason to be thankful and proud that we are Canadians; and I want to say right here that the French Acadians whom I have the honour to represent are as good and loyal citizens as any in Canada, and esteem it a privilege to live in this country.

If I may be permitted, I will give you part of the life history of our forefathers. I shall refer to the history of my ancestors, because one of them left a diary of his life, which I possess. My ancestors on my father's side came from St. Malo, France, in 1604, among the first Acadians: I do not know much about what happened to their descendants. My grandfather on my mother's side came to Canada through another channel. Around 1812, when, as you know, England and France were at war, my great-grandfather, whose name was Francois Lambert Bourneuf, left his birth-place, Cherbourg—where the Allies landed during the last war—bound for Santos, South America, in a merchant marine vessel called *La Furieuse*. On the return trip his ship encountered an English fleet south of Newfoundland. In the resulting engagement they lost seventeen of their men, and my great-grandfather got a bullet through his leg. Three other men were taken prisoners with him, brought to Halifax, and put in jail at Melville island, on the North West Arm.