

The marketing and transportation of fish involves a great many issues, and it is very difficult to assign any disadvantages in our marketing and transportation of fish to any one cause. For instance, it might be that some of the disadvantages might lie with the fishermen in their methods of catching, others with the fish exporter, and others again with those who transport and market the fish. A great deal would also depend upon the consuming population, that is as to whether they were a fish-consuming people.

The domestic fish trade of Canada is, of course, largely of the fresh fish business. In the Maritime Provinces our experience largely relates to the salt fish trade. We have been engaged in that form of fish trade for a long number of years, and our markets are to be found throughout the whole world. Consequently, as our long experience has been mostly in the salt fish trade, we are not so well acquainted with the fresh fish trade. In the province of British Columbia their experience largely relates to the fresh and canned fishing business. In fact, with the exception of the Maritime Provinces, the experience of the rest of Canada is largely with the fresh fish business. The experience of the Maritime Provinces has, until recent years at least, been practically confined to the salt fish business. The fresh fish trade presents many difficulties, not only in Canada, but also in the United States. For instance, it is necessary to have a regular supply of fish, and a regular and fairly cheap system of transportation. Again, the fresh fish market is more easily disturbed by weather conditions than the salt fish market. Those who have any knowledge of the fresh fish trade understand very well that it is a much more hazardous business than the salt or cured fish trade. In connection with the Canadian fresh fish trade, there are also difficulties which are peculiarly due to conditions in this country. In the first place, we have a very small and a very scattered population, and in this respect we are at a very much greater disadvantage than are those engaged in the same trade in the United States. For instance, the port of Boston is probably the largest fishing port in North America, and probably in the world, and in connection with the fresh fish trade it has tremendous advantages over any Canadian port. If there is a surplus of fish on the Boston market after that city and nearby places have been supplied, the Boston fish

merchants can readily load several cars, or even a train, with the surplus and dispose of it in the towns of the States of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont, where they will find a large number of customers. If they are unable to dispose of their surplus in these cities and towns they have the market of Montreal, even in the face of the duty. It is for these reasons that the American fresh fish trade has many advantages over persons engaged in that business in Canada. I have heard the suggestion made more than once by fish merchants in Canada that the Canadian people per capita do not consume fish to the same extent as people in the United States, and I fear there is an element of truth in that. What it is due to I would not venture to say. I would imagine, however, that Canada being a cold country, on the whole, that there is not the same desire to use fish as a foodstuff as would be in warmer countries.

The hon. member for Guysborough (Mr. Sinclair) expressed his disagreement with the policy of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries in assigning to the Naval Branch of that department the administration of fisheries. I was not aware that this was the case. I had been under the impression that merely the administration of the steamers and ships belonging to the Government had been placed under the Department of Naval Affairs for administration. I concur in the view expressed by the hon. member for Guysborough. To have fisheries administered by the Naval Branch is apt to bring that service into ridicule and contempt. I do not mean to say that the administration of fisheries is injured in efficiency by being placed under the control of the naval branch, but upon the face of it, and upon paper, it looks rather absurd and is apt to bring the service more or less into ridicule. I quite approve of the work of the department in producing the little booklet dwelling upon the value of fish for food purposes, but I think the booklet is made less effective by bearing on its face the announcement that it was issued by the Naval Branch. For there is no relation whatever between the administration of fisheries and the administration of the naval service. I think I mentioned this last year in the House, or else I spoke to the minister privately about it. I have forgotten what reasons he gave me on that occasion for the course of the department in this matter. I am not making these remarks in any cen-