

Sept 1925

THE GUARDIAN.

# HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS OF PROCEEDINGS.

(Continued.)

mitting herring to be put up not only as food, but also for the manufacture of oil and meal. If other countries have a sufficiency of herring for these purposes, so have we. If the herring that were on the coast last year, could have been marketed the proceeds would have easily reached as much as one-third the proceeds of the cod fishery. Owing to the low price of \$3 a barrel being paid, men could not profitably put them up. Quite a number of those present could remember the first time fresh salmon was exported. This was under the Government of Sir E. P. Morris. At that time the project failed. The salmon purchasers were no disheartened however. Last year two steamers took loads of salmon out of Bonavista Bay and men made as much as \$150.00 out of salmon. This shows what can be done. This year it is expected we will export 200,000 barrels of herring. Letters have been received from a gentleman who went to the West Indies to find a market for herring, that show the results of his work have been very satisfactory. Our herring packed in the usual ship-shod way is now fetching \$9 and if it were all No. 1 herring we could get a much higher figure. Listening to remarks passed here, one would imagine that the close season on lobsters has been inaugurated for the benefit of one or two. It is simply the result of the considerations of the Board that they have decided it is most essential to do this. A few dissenters were heard from Placentia. The hon. member for that district, however, pointed out the necessity of the measure and they now realise it. It is useless to put laws in force unless they are going to be carried out and this is one thing that the Board is prepared to see to. Some of the \$20,000 the Board has received will have to be spent in seeing that the laws are enforced. In reply to Mr. Halfyard's suggestion as to whether they were going to can crabs he said that it was a pity that the crabs that have been caught had not been marketed. The same applies to haddock. Many of our Northern fishermen will not eat a haddock. If crabs were canned they could be sold as easily as any other fish. He stated that they had received requests for information from abroad as to the canning of codfish. The Department is now looking for some man who has a scientific knowledge of canning, and they hope to be able to relieve the necessity of the men of St. Barbe. We do not pay sufficient attention to turbot in this country. In Trinity Bay they have been giving attention to this class of fish. There are now regulations with regard to the inspection of turbot. He felt sure that turbot could be marketed with a very good profit to all concerned. This all goes to show the efforts that are being made by the Department to encourage the fisheries. Relative to bait depots, he said that there were certain funds available to assist in this work. It has not been successful as there are not very many sufficiently interested. He agreed that some action was necessary to establish depots on the coast. He pointed out that there was not sufficient interest in trawling amongst the Labrador fishermen, owing to the difficulty of obtaining bait. The bankers from the West Coast do it with success at the time when the Northern men are leaving, but the bankers usually carry their bait. He hoped that the Government would very shortly be able to erect some bait stations. He agreed with Mr. Lake that any man should be allowed to haul bait wherever he likes and should be allowed to catch fish wherever he likes, and in what way he likes. In conclusion he said the Department had been asked for a special grant for lighthouses around the Humber Arm; they are preparing for some lights on the West Coast and for a fog alarm on Peckford's Island. He particularly desired to commend the work of Mr. Ashbourne in endeavouring to have certain marine works finished at Twillingate. These works he himself knew to be of immense benefit to all the fishermen of that area and he hoped that they would be completed this year. The Government was endeavouring to carry out its

promises, but as the Minister pointed out they could not be expected to do all they promised in so short a period as seven months.

MR. DUFF said all were delighted to note the interest the Minister of Marine and Fisheries displayed in the welfare of the fishermen. He was very pleased to note the inclusion of some outport men on the Fishery Board, but thought that the fact that they were unpaid might have accounted for the fact of their appointments. The member read some very interesting statistics that had been prepared by the late Mr. Ragnoli. People can really to-day no longer afford to catch fish. He urged the government to endeavour to reduce taxation and give the fishermen a chance.

MR. GRIMES said that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries had criticised the conduct of the Department during previous Governments. He declared that the lack of advancement of fisheries was not solely due to the apathy of the Department, but to some extent was due to differences existing on Water St. He was heartily in accord with the vote of \$20,000 for scientific investigation. A suggestion was put forward by the honourable member for a campaign throughout the Island to popularise fish as a food, and he cited instances of what had been done in Canada and the United States in that regard. Touching upon the subject of a direct West Indian steamship service he stated that it would have greatly increased the sales of our fish there, as had been done in Nova Scotia.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL pointed out that when the matter was being considered it received very little encouragement from the exporters. They were practically unanimous against the idea.

MR. GRIMES, continuing, made reference to the high freight rates prevailing in the country. Reference was also made to bait depots being established and to the lack of boat accommodation on the ships bringing home the fishermen from Labrador with a suggestion that the men be allowed to take their trap boats with them. In concluding he stated that we could do much more than we are doing for the fisheries, that our net hods are not keeping pace with modern requirements.

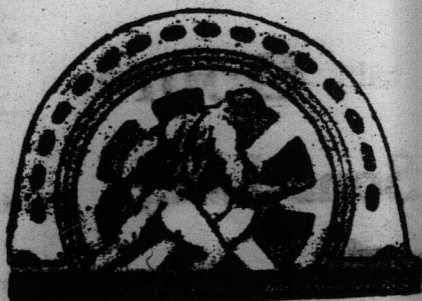
THE MINISTER OF MARINE & FISHERIES claimed that the great majority of the merchants of the country did not encourage the idea of a West India Steamship Service. Referring to the question of overcrowded boats, this was a matter that he had no control over, but he considered it a very good idea. This was a matter for the Railway Commission. The Minister had already explained his views on the question of establishing bait depots.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION regarded the vote as the most important in the whole Estimates. Though in hearty accord with the principle of fish inspection, he failed to see the resulting benefits from the rules and regulations covering the inspection of split herring, as recently published in the Newfoundland Gazette. These regulations will operate as a hardship upon the herring packers of Green Bay. He expressed regret that as a member of the Fishery Board, Mr. Ashbourne should entertain different opinions from him, but that could not be helped. He regretted that there was very little market for split herring and suggested a bonus being given. He quite agreed with Mr. Lake's strong pleas for bait stations. The West Coast required this and deserved it. Referring to the amount of \$20,000 given in pauper relief to Upper Island Cove, he pointed out that these men were miners on Bell Island, who only earned sufficient to maintain themselves, whilst work was in progress. He did not agree that men might catch fish when, how and where they pleased, for this would soon deplete out fish. The Norwegians are in a position to produce fish cheaper than we can in this country. Principally do they save in the matter of engine fuel for there they use crude oil where we use gasoline. In other ways they are able to be more economical and to sell their fish cheaper than we can. He had himself explored the possibilities of opening up new markets in Europe. The Russian herring market is principally supplied from the North Sea and England. An attempt was made to open a market in salt

salmon in Germany, before the war but no market could be found there for our salmon. Similarly, efforts had been made to market on the West Coast of Africa, and to Rio de Janeiro. Fruitless efforts had been likewise made to open a lobster market in Buenos Aires, but the fish deteriorated in transit. Our American markets in the States and in Porto Rico were ruined by the tax of \$1.25 a quintal. Suggestion was put forward that some tax might be placed on American shipping by way of reprisal. He declared that the necessity of placing a three year close season on lobsters was due to the non-enforcement of regulations relative to the size of laths used in the traps. If similar regulation concerning the size of mesh in traps were not enforced, then the inshore cod fishery would also be lost. He was strongly in favour of a West India service and felt it would be of immense benefit. He said that the Attorney-General had stated that when this measure was before a Select Committee the bulk of those who gave evidence before that Committee did not encourage the scheme. But as everyone knew many of those people would have been effected financially by the inauguration of this service and hence they were unwilling to encourage the idea. Reference had been made by previous speakers to the Fishery Regulations of 1921-22. He freely admitted that he was an opponent of these regulations. Sir William Coaker had received all the blame but he could tell the House that that gentleman did not conceive them. They were conceived in the minds of other gentlemen and forced on Mr. Coaker and he had to see they were carried out after becoming the policy of the government and take all the onus. He still believed the regulations were extremely detrimental to the interests of Newfoundland.

MR. ASHBORNE desired to explain his position on the Fishery Board, with regard to the inspection of split herring. When the matter was mooted he had opposed the scheme and even to-day he could not speak favourably of it. The other members approved of it and it was endorsed by Mr. J. Allen Taylor. He believed the Government was going to find it difficult to conduct the inspection. He suggested that the best move to encourage the split herring industry would be to grant a bounty upon the pack.

MR. HALFYARD thought that all the previous speakers had displayed much intelligent interest in the question. Many suggestions had been put forward, but he was not really competent to make any comment or criticism upon them. He seized the occasion offered him, by some remarks made earlier in the day by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to make a spirited address in defence of the administration with which he was associated. Whilst speaking on



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the advantages of good roads he referred to the road built between Lead Cove and Old Perlican, a road some two and three quarter miles long and which cost \$14,000 per mile. He did not think that this amount worked out at the rate stated by the Prime Minister which would be the basis of expenditure under the Highroads Policy. Referring to the remarks of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries about the question of a road from Gambo to Greenspond, he felt that this journey could be made far more easily and cheaply by water than by road. He regretted the state of our fish markets to-day and emphasized his remarks by quoting extensively from certain memorials of the United Fishermen. He declared that the chief work of the legislature should be the consideration of better market conditions for fish. We should not be led away by any side issue from this matter.

The vote for the Department of Marine and Fisheries being passed, THE MINISTER OF FINANCE felt that it was not the duty of a Government to actually advertise, and appoint agents to sell fish. He felt this was the work of the merchants to sell their own fish.

The Committee then rose, and having reported progress were given leave to sit again.

MR. W. J. WALSH on the motion for adjournment referred to the condition of many of our fellow countrymen in the coal areas in Nova Scotia, occasioned by the strike there. He did not regret the response to the Relief Fund started in the Daily News as worthy of the country. Amongst those destitute miners he estimated that there were fully 4000 Newfoundlanders. He made reference to the generosity of the people of Nova Scotia on the occasion of our own distress. He did not know what stand the Government was going to take on the matter, but he felt that the Government would only be acting in an equitable manner if it made a contribution from the public funds. He strongly urged that something be done to show our sympathy to the starving people.

Adjournment was taken at midnight until 3 p.m. Thursday.

April 3rd.

The House met at 3 p.m.

PETITIONS.  
HON. M. S. SULLIVAN presented a petition from Ship Harbour on the subject of a telephone.

MR. HICKMAN presented a petition from Bay Roberts East on the subject of employment.

HON. W. J. HIGGINS presented two petitions from Green Bay on the subject of a road, and of certain marine works respectively.

ANSWERS.  
Replying to a question of Mr. Hickman the Prime Minister said the matter of the appointment of the Highways Commission was under consideration.

Replying to the same member's question as to whether the Government had any engineers in its service who would be able to check up the work on the Dock by Messrs. Bishop, the Prime Minister said that he did not know of anyone at present in the employ of the Government who would be able to give the necessary time to this work, if the agreement be entered into with Messrs. W. I. Bishop, Ltd. There was nobody at present in sight, but he did not think it would be necessary to import such an engineer.

Relative to the appeal sent him for assistance in the relief of destitution in the Glace Bay area he replied that the matter had not been considered as yet by the Government. He had been asked as Prime Minister, to put the appeal before the people through the press and he hoped that the response would have been better.

Messrs. Vickers & Company had not been asked to tender for the dock repairs, nor had they made any offer for the purchase or hire of the dock for a term of years. He was unaware of their having made any survey of the dock, and consequently had not a copy of any such survey.

Certain Resolutions on Supply were read a first and second time and agreed with by the House.

MR. SPEAKER advised the House that the Council had sent down certain amendments to the Egreess from Churches Bill. These amendments were read a first time and ordered to be read a second time to-day.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL pointed out that these amend-

ments were to operate as an entirely new Bill to repeal the present legislation. He suggested that the amendments be printed and distributed.

MR. SPEAKER advised the House that a message had been received from the Council advising the House of the concurrence of that body with the House's amendments to the Council's amendments on the Highway Traffic Bill.

AGRICULTURE  
The House then went into Committee of the Whole on Supply and took up the vote for the Department of Agriculture and Mines.

MR. DUFF referred to the jumping of claims by persons who had not sufficient capital to really work these claims. He suggested that some regulations should be adopted to minimize such practices. Due encouragement should be given to the fisherman farmer. He regretted the emigration of Newfoundlanders to other countries.

MR. SCAMMELL said as the Minister had stated the matter of agriculture was an important one in this Colony. The annual vote to this Department was not such a pettifoggish idea as might appear on the surface. He regretted the annual expenditure of nearly four millions for the importation of foods which might well be produced in the country. The honorable member briefly reviewed the agricultural policies of previous administrations since 1910. The fisherman farmer is a very great asset to the country. The older generation is slowly dying out and the young ones are not displaying any true interest in matters agricultural, which appeared to him to be a sign of decay. He suggested that an adjustment of the tariff on agricultural implements would be a very wise step to encourage farming. In conclusion he wished the Minister every success in his scheme for the furtherance of agriculture in the Colony.

THE MINISTER thanked the two previous speakers for their remarks, and desired to assure the House that there would be no discrimination shown between our districts in the expenditure of moneys in the furtherance of his policy. Furthermore he declared that party politics would play no part in his scheme.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY expressed his gratification at the facts given the House by the Honourable Minister. He felt that on this he could speak for the Government and the members on both sides of the House. He was particularly interested in the data given on the mineral outlook in the country. He thought any money spent on mineral development in this country would be a sound investment, and he would back the Minister in any scheme he inaugurated for this purpose. He cited what had been done at Argentina by Mr. MacKay, and said that through our exhibit at Wembley, a group of English capitalists were hotly coming out here to work the mines and the outlook was even brighter than ever even the optimistic Mr. MacKay had hoped for.



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