

representations were made on behalf of the fishing companies and others, that they should be allowed to fish without restrictions, and their statements as to the capacity of the lake and its resources in fish were different from those made by the fisheries officers. At that time 150 licenses had been applied for and taken out.

Mr. OLIVER: The minister now is dealing with Lesser Slave lake.

Mr. HAZEN: No, my present remarks are confined entirely to Lac la Biche. Professor Prince has been at Lesser Slave lake and he also inquired about the condition at Lac la Biche. He reported that in his judgment 400,000 pounds of fish could be taken out without destroying the usefulness of the lake as a fishing lake, and his report was concurred in by the fishery officers of the district. We therefore placed a limit of 400,000 pounds, and that is the limit to-day. The point was raised—and I understand that to a certain extent that is the complaint of the hon. member for Edmonton—that if only a limited quantity of fish were allowed to be taken from the lake the department should issue only a limited number of licenses.

Mr. OLIVER: Commercial licenses.

Mr. HAZEN: Yes. But I ask the hon. gentleman, how are you going to draw the line? If people, bona fide engaged in the fishing business, make application for licenses, are you going to say to some: "You shall not have licenses," and to others "You shall have licenses." My hon. friend will see how very difficult it would be for the department to give a privilege, or a preference, to some people who are no more bona fide engaged in the fishing business than others who are applicants for licenses. Therefore, we have thought it better to grant licenses to all who are bona fide engaged in the fishing business and to limit the catch than to attempt to discriminate between the people who make application. That is the rule that prevails with regard to the lobster canneries; a close season is provided, regulations are made and the people, under those conditions, apply for the licenses and get them, taking their chance on getting a satisfactory catch. The department fixed 400,000 pounds as the quantity that could be safely taken from the lake during the summer season without depleting it. Having fixed that limit, its policy is to grant licenses to people who want them and as soon as the inspectors find that that quantity has been taken

[Mr. Hazen.]

from the lake, the fishing is stopped. That is a fairer course than would be that which has been suggested of giving licenses to the first half dozen who apply, and saying to the others: "As you did not apply in time you cannot have a license."

Mr. OLIVER: I quite agree as to the propriety of restricting the amount of fish which may be taken out of any of these lakes in accordance with the best information the department has. My information is that the limit is 240,000 pounds on Lac la Biche for the summer fishing.

Mr. HAZEN: The first report we had from our officers was that 240,000 pounds was the amount that we could safely allow to be taken out, but subsequent reports have led us to the conclusion that 400,000 pounds might be taken out in a season without injury and 400,000 is the amount now fixed.

Mr. OLIVER: There are two seasons for fishing?

Mr. HAZEN: Just the summer season.

Mr. OLIVER: For this season the amount is 400,000 and not 240,000 pounds?

Mr. HAZEN: 400,000 pounds.

Mr. OLIVER: That is perfectly satisfactory. I do not wish to unduly press the department about restricting the amount of fish that may be taken from the lake and I appreciate that there may be some difficulties in adjusting the issuing of licenses. The department might take the view that it has information before it as to whether people could make a living out of fishing or not. If they choose to put it that way, that is a matter for their consideration, but what I desire to emphasize is that if they are going to restrict the amount that may be taken, and if they are not going to restrict the number of licenses to be issued, the public should have notice before they apply, that the licenses are issued subject to a restriction upon the taking of fish. With regard to Lac La Biche, my information is that licenses were issued without restriction and that preparation was made, both by the fishermen and the fish companies, for taking an unrestricted amount of fish, but that on the 4th day of May, just before the fishing opened, they were notified not that 400,000 pounds, but that only 240,000 pounds, might be taken. I am sure that the minister must appreciate the unfortunate position that resulted from that lack of notice. The people who had obtained licenses had no means