

*Supply—Fisheries*

in Halifax. Over a period of several years many of us had brought to the attention of the various officials who were considering this serious question the reasons why it appeared to us that Halifax was the logical and best place for the establishment of these headquarters. I am delighted that our views were concurred in and that this step was taken. I hope the members of the secretariat of that headquarters are finding their stay in Halifax a pleasure, and that they will find the scientific and library facilities available to them there of great assistance in the carrying on of the important work being done by this organization.

As I understand it, the purpose of this northwest Atlantic fisheries council is to control the exploitation of what the minister referred to this afternoon as the greatest single fisheries in the world. I refer to the great fisheries concentrated around the Grand Banks in Newfoundland, and the fisheries which stretch up north into the Arctic circle in the vicinity of Greenland and Labrador, and stretch into the gulf of St. Lawrence, to which reference was made by the hon. member for Queens who immediately preceded me, and which stretch down the Atlantic coast along the banks which lie off the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia and around into the bay of Fundy and along the Atlantic coast of the United States. This whole area is tremendously productive in fisheries. More and more we are coming to realize that the best long-range interests of everyone connected with this great industry lie in the proper conservation of these great resources and the prosecution of the fisheries in a way which will contribute to their maximum productivity without damaging the long-range future of the industry.

The hon. member for Queens read to the committee from historical works a number of quotations which indicate the prolific fishery which existed in the periods to which he referred, three hundred or four hundred years ago. After four centuries of extensive fishing we could not expect that these conditions would still exist, nor should we expect that these conditions can be brought back again without an almost complete closing off of the fisheries. However, I think we can look forward to and expect a similar experience to that which has been realized in other places. As a result of policies of conservation and proper exploitation of resources of this kind I think we can look forward to establishing in the Atlantic provinces extensive modern facilities for the preparation and production of modern fish products, with an assurance and confidence that there will be maintained a fish population sufficient to provide the raw material which these great industries require.

[Mr. Dickey.]

I am sure that few members of the committee and perhaps few members of the public, even in the Atlantic provinces, realize the tremendous expansion, in terms of capital expenditure, that has gone on in the fishing industry since the end of the war. On the Atlantic coast over the last four or five years large and important new processing plants have been built in various locations such as Louisburg, Arichat, Petite de Grat. Facilities in the industry have also been modernized and increased in Halifax, Canso, Lockeport and in many other locations too numerous to mention. These capital expenditures, for their usefulness and for their productivity, depend on the maintenance of a supply of raw fish. That is one of the main objectives of the council to which I have referred. These fisheries are international fisheries and must be shared. If they are to be shared between nations the only sensible way to organize those fisheries is by a co-operative international council such as the one that has been established with headquarters at Halifax.

In this connection I should like to mention a problem that was also mentioned by the hon. member for Gloucester. A rather embarrassing and difficult situation exists in connection with the limits which are imposed upon trawlers and dragnets of Canadian registry and Canadian ownership and those which ply their trade in our waters which come from other countries. The situation is brought about by a difference in ground rules, as we might say.

Under international law non-Canadian ships are entitled to come within three miles of the coast. In other words, they are entitled to drag right up to what Canada regards as her international boundary at sea. However, Canadian vessels over a certain size are restricted to twelve miles from the coast line. In other words, there is an additional nine miles of ocean. I think that this is a situation that should not be permitted to continue. I know that it is not exclusively a problem of the Department of Fisheries. It also involves our concept of international law and would involve the Department of External Affairs. I am also aware that this question of territorial waters and international regulation of the use of such waters is an extremely confused one. However, I submit that it would not contribute greatly to the confusion if Canada were to take a firm stand that would at least put our own fishing vessels on a basis of equality with those from other countries.

I was also pleased to hear the minister refer to the steps that have been taken to organize the conservation of the Atlantic salmon fisheries over the whole Atlantic area. I think these arrangements were necessary