

Mr. KINLEY: Supposing he is?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Not a thing wrong—and I am not condemning him.

Mr. KINLEY: He is a good man?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): He is a good business man, yes. He and his brother built up the industry, and I am not attacking him, at all. I shall come to my point in a moment, and it is this, that as fisheries controller he was vested with certain powers. I wish to be corrected if I am wrong, but I believe he established a ceiling price in respect of the sardine fisheries. I should like to know, in the first place, if that is correct. I want to know, secondly, if at one time there was a prohibition on the export of these fish to the Maine factories?

Mr. BERTRAND (Laurier): I do not know that, but I would remind my hon. friend, when he asks these questions, that Mr. McLean and Mr. Morrow are both employees of the wartime prices and trade board.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I know that; the minister need not remind me. I am talking about the development of fisheries, and the export trade. I consider this germane to the point. I do not wish to be held down too tightly, because with me that just breeds opposition. I am willing to be quiescent and helpful, and I think my remarks so far have been fair.

Mr. BERTRAND (Laurier): I take what the hon. member says as constructive criticism.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Was a ceiling put on the price of sardines in the Passamaquoddy and bay of Fundy areas, and is that ceiling price still on? Secondly, was there any period of time during the present fishing season or the past fishing season, when there was a prohibition on the export of these sardine herrings to the United States? My reason for asking the question is this, that if freedom of export were permitted, the fishermen could get double what they are getting to-day. I have no doubt about that. The demand is so great from both the armed forces of the United States and those of the allied nations, that the man who goes down before daylight to fish and who works hard and long hours—and in some days goes often and catches nothing—is entitled in my opinion to sell those fish where he can get the highest price for them. The season is very short; there is no winter fishing. Most of the plants are closed in the winter season, although I believe some of them do carry on. However, the catch is precarious, and it is a seasonal business.

Has there been to the knowledge of the minister and the officials of his department any

situation such as I have inquired about? Was there at any time a ceiling on the price the fishermen might receive for their catch, and is that ceiling still on? If so, when was it established? Then, was there at any time a prohibition on the export of these raw fish to the United States; if so, when, and for what period of time? How long did it last? Was it removed or has it been removed, or is it still there? I should like to have the whole story, and I do not know any other item under which I could ask these questions.

Mr. BERTRAND (Laurier): All of these questions are questions which officials of the wartime prices and trade board could answer. I am not able to answer all the questions. I may say that there is no restriction on the export of sardines to the United States now. Restrictions that existed were removed about eight months ago. I should like to give some explanation about our trade with the United States. In 1942 it was found that the West Indies were in great need of salt fish. They used to get this fish from Norway but that country could not, of course, export any.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I think the West Indies bought from Nova Scotia.

Mr. BERTRAND (Laurier): They have not bought from Nova Scotia for some time. The united nations combined food board studied the situation, and the United States agreed to cut its imports of salt fish by fifty per cent in order to allow the exporting nations to send fish to the West Indies. Regulations had to be put into force and import permits were granted by the United States, with export permits being granted by the producing nations. This created a great demand for salt fish and for other fish in the United States because the supply was being cut by fifty per cent. Prices went up. We had to regulate the export of fish to the West Indies by establishing a quota based on 1941. This created a lot of difficulty because exporters wanted to sell their fish where they could get the highest prices. At one time the OPA prices in the United States were as much as seven to eight cents a pound more than ours, although ours were high enough.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): There is no ceiling in the United States.

Mr. BERTRAND (Laurier): There was a ceiling then. That ceiling varied according to the season. Since then, prices of fish in the United States have been reduced to about the same level as ours.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): They are much higher.