

*Supply—Marine and Fisheries*

to the practical phase of the fishing situation in our province. They are of the opinion that the investigations of the board are too abstract and academic: to use the expression of the fishermen themselves, you cannot put this knowledge into the can. The particular claim which the fishermen make is that there are too many desk men, what we might call office men, being sent into the field to inquire about matters which responsible fishermen have known for a very long time. I referred the other day to the inquiry into sea lions, when as a matter of fact what should be inquired into is the problem how to destroy the sea lions which are eating up our fish. The fishermen claim that investigators from the board try experiments in artificial planting in areas where hatchery fish would not have the slightest chance owing to freshets on the one hand or where streams dry up. The board officials have not the necessary knowledge and, the fishermen claim, errors are made which could be avoided if practical fishermen were consulted. I mention this matter in order to convey to the minister the idea that the board is not nearly as practical as it should be. I know that these long names which are referred to in the reports of the research department—such terms for instance as protozoa, diatoms, copepods and zooplankton, and all that sort of thing—are all right in their place. They refer to the very lowest and microscopic forms of animal life in existence, some that cannot be seen with the naked eye.

Mr. CARDIN: What big names.

Mr. McRAE: Yes I am afraid the sockeye salmon will be in that class soon. If we cannot get some practical work done by this biological board we will not be able to see the sockeye salmon, not on account of its size but on account of its extinction. I notice that among other things mentioned in the report is an investigation of the life history of the teredo, to which the hon. member for Skeena referred. We all know enough about the life history of the teredo; it lives too long to please us and what we want is some preparation which will prevent the teredo from doing so much harm. We have succeeded now in finding that method in part through creosoting.

As you read the report the thing that impresses you very much is the small consideration which has been given to the reestablishment of our fisheries; in fact you will find only one reference to it in this research work, and that is the study of salmon scales for the provincial government. That is rather an absurd reference.

[Mr. McRae.]

I think the department would be well advised to cut out those things in future reports. The report is supposed to be read by members who, like myself, do not follow it very closely, and I suggest that if it were confined to practical matters and written in common trade terms which we can all understand, the government would be saved a lot of printing expense and the members of this house would have more information than they obtain from this report at present.

With regard to field investigations, there again the findings of the board do not deal with salmon. Coming to the heading "Publicity," and as far as I can see that is confined to two small aquariums which are being established at Nanaimo. I submit that if we are going to establish any of these aquariums for the education of the public they should be located in the populous centres where more people will see them and more good will be done. I have no doubt that these aquariums would be more advantageously located in Vancouver or Victoria than in Nanaimo, where very few people go and where there are very few fishermen. Nanaimo is a coal town and there are no fishermen there except a few Japanese who fish for herring and that sort of thing. Why we should put this biological board in Nanaimo is not clear to me, particularly as it appears from these reports that the board has an educational duty to perform. I notice they are to build a museum in Prince Rupert; I fear that we have about reached that stage of the fisheries problem in our province where museums will be necessary in order to display the last specimens of that great commercial fish, the sockeye salmon. As far as I can see there is no other useful purpose to be served by these museums and there is no reason why the public money should be spent in this way while we have a real fish problem to work out.

I have given the views of the fishermen and now I want to give the views of the cannery men, who say there is certainly great room for biological work in the fish business, and that perhaps the reason why this board had not done very much was because they had not much money. Just here I might say that the United States authorities reported a year or two ago that the work done by this biological board was very good, but that it was very meagre. The business interests in my province have expressed the opinion that there is great need for a biological board but that this board is not devoting very much consideration to the practical issues with which we are confronted.