

Why has agriculture enjoyed widespread support in contrast to fisheries? The basic reason is that prior to 1900 up to 80% of the populations of Canada, the United States, and most other countries were directly engaged in agriculture. Consequently, the interest in agriculture, and pressures for improvements, were immense. It is only within the past 30 to 50 years that the number of people directly employed in agriculture has tended to become a minority. This situation has been brought about directly through increased productivity resulting from research effort that was, and still is, of enormous scope. The smaller numbers of people engaged in fisheries, and the existence of certain apparent difficulties unique to fisheries, have militated against the development of fisheries research. Some aspects of fisheries research, such as physical and biological oceanography, and experiments in the natural environment, admittedly are expensive. The costs of many other aspects involving "wet" and "dry" laboratories compare favourably with those of agricultural or other lines of research. Additional and adequate support of fisheries research should produce benefits of the same order as those achieved in agriculture. Certainly the potential is there, and a research program wisely formulated and vigorously pursued will produce solid results which could make our aquatic environment as important as any resource we possess.

In technical matters Canada's fisheries have made great strides in breaking away from the traditional techniques of the past, particularly since World War II. We have moved from two-masted schooners to highly mechanized stern trawlers. Purse seiners are adding to the Atlantic herring harvest previously obtained from primitive shore-fishing weirs. New fish processing plants are now becoming show places in the food-processing industry.

Living resources in the water, however, have not yielded to engineering techniques which seem adequate elsewhere. Two examples will illustrate: The salmon hatcheries reached their crest of popularity a half century ago and were efficient as to percentage hatch, yet they did not enhance the salmon stocks. Only now are rational rearing procedures