

Mr. BATES: I am pretty sure that changes will be given the most careful government consideration before anything is done.

Mr. STICK: While I am on this subject, could you explain to the committee the exact position as it stands now regarding these foreign ships coming in for supplies?

Hon. Mr. SINCLAIR: The Portugese ships, you mean, Mr. Stick?

Mr. STICK: The Portugese ships, yes; take that as an example.

Mr. OZERE: Under the Terms of Union with Newfoundland, we were requested before applying The Customs & Fisheries Protection Act to amend the Act before applying it to Newfoundland so as to permit the government to allow any foreign fishing vessels to come in and purchase bait and supplies in Newfoundland. This was done in 1949, and following the amendment an order in council was issued, which is renewed on an annual basis, and the present authority is Order in Council P.C. 6767 of December 14, 1951. It gives authority to the Minister: (1) to issue during the calendar year 1952 licences to United States fishing vessels to enter any port on the Atlantic coast of Canada to purchase bait, ice, seines, lines and all other supplies; and (2) to issue licences to any foreign fishing vessels in the calendar year enabling them to enter any port in the province of Newfoundland for the same purposes.

That is, in so far as United States vessels are concerned, they are allowed to enter any port on the Atlantic coast of Canada, including the maritime provinces and Newfoundland.

A similar Order in Council has now been passed for the year 1953. It is on an annual basis. The government could at any time revoke it and could also say as to what vessels it should apply. In other words, it could exclude Spanish vessels and say that only Portugese vessels would have this right, and so on. But that is a matter of government policy, and so far the policy has been continued, as was requested by the Newfoundland delegation.

Mr. STICK: What are the terms you specify there—you said consideration was given to some request. What was the wording you referred to? I just forget.

Mr. OZERE: I will read that. It is not in the document "Terms of Union" itself. It is in a statement of questions raised by the Newfoundland delegation during the negotiations for the union of Newfoundland and Canada. On page 8, section 2 reads:

At present the Customs and Fisheries Protection Act prohibits the selling of bait to foreign fishing vessels in Canadian territorial waters unless exempt by special treaty or convention. An amendment to this Act will be introduced in order to continue the practice now followed by Newfoundland in this matter.

Hon. Mr. SINCLAIR: Mr. Stick there is just one point that should be raised, and this actually strengthens the position of the Newfoundland fishermen. I have just come back from Newfoundland, and one of the points raised was this very question, and it was raised by the fishermen, not by the merchants, as to why we should continue to allow these great foreign fishing fleets to come in to this real base—because, after all, Newfoundland is the real base of the great Atlantic fisheries. These fishing fleets have to come thousands of miles from their home bases to fish there. The fishermen's union just questioned as to how long range a program it was to allow them this continued privilege when every year our sales to their markets drop, and they used Portugal as an example. This year we are selling them 30,000 quintals of fish, whereas some years we sold them 100,000 quintals. The more fish the Portugese catch the less fish the Newfoundland fisherman is going to sell to the Portugese. On the other hand, the sales of outfitting supplies by the merchants in the Newfoundland ports are quite important to the merchants. We want to see a