

Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Prefontaine) concerning the salmon fishery in British Columbia. With all due deference to him and his predecessors, my opinion is—and it is backed by statistics and the results of scientific research—that the catching of salmon in trap-nets is utterly indefensible. I am sure that the minister has not in his department any evidence that would reasonably justify the course which he is adopting in this instance. The commissioner of fisheries, in my opinion, is responsible for this grave step on the part of the government. I do not wish to shift the responsibility from the shoulders of the minister, but I know that the practical working out of these matters in the department hinges very largely on the advice of the commissioner of fisheries. Now, the commissioner, in my opinion, knows practically nothing about the requirements of the fisheries in British Columbia. That he knows very little is evidenced by his reports and his advice as to the habits of the salmon in British Columbia. He knows very little indeed,—taking the same means of arriving at a conclusion as to what he does know—he knows very little indeed as to the views of the fishermen as a whole in the province of British Columbia with respect to this important industry. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries, who has never been in British Columbia in his capacity as a minister, has stated that the majority of the people in British Columbia engaged in the fishing industry are in favour of this method of fishing. That is not the fact. The minister has evidently been so advised by the commissioner who has on several occasions gone to the province, and, in my opinion has bungled the thing in every instance, advising the minister wrongly, and, in consequence of the advice of the commissioner of fisheries, and perhaps other officials, the government have taken this erroneous step. So far as the fishermen in the province of British Columbia are concerned, I venture to say there is not a man of them who is not opposed to trap-net fishing. The people who want to install these traps and who have succeeded to a limited extent in getting them installed, are the capitalists in Montreal and Toronto, Mr. Porteous of Montreal, Mr. Cronyn and Mr. Aemilius Irving of Toronto, who are controlling the British Columbia Packing Association, men who are engaged in salmon fishing in British Columbia, but who know nothing about it personally, except to the extent of making dividends and profits out of it, and exploiting this important industry to its ultimate ruin.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Bloated capitalists.

Mr. MORRISON. No, I am not going to talk about bloated capitalists at all. I think we ought to encourage capital, and if there is one province in the Dominion of Canada which requires capital more than another,

it is British Columbia. But there is such a thing as getting capital at too great a cost, and in this case that is so. I do not wish to detain the House further in expressing my strong objection to this clause, and I move that all the words after 'means' in the 49th line be struck out of subsection 2.

Mr. HAGGART. The minister will agree to that.

Mr. MORRISON. I urge that there is not sufficient evidence before the minister to justify him in making such an important amendment to the fishery laws as this clause involves. What I have been urging for a long time upon the minister is that he should visit the province himself and investigate matters before he adopts this legislation.

Mr. HAGGART. The minister says he wants to make the present law so that it can be enforced.

Mr. MORRISON. No, he has granted licenses to several people to fish by this trap method. I cannot understand by what authority he has done so. There is Mr. Todd of Victoria, for instance, who got a trap license, and he is to-day fishing salmon with a trap-net.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. I would like to state that the reason why the practice of trap fishing was initiated by the minister was due to the fact that for many years fishing by traps has been very extensively carried on on the sound. If there is anything in the argument at all, it is that the waters are likely to be depleted by the practice of trap fishing. As a matter of fact traps are extensively used on the American side of the Sound at the present time. The great object in adopting the practice of fishing by traps on the west coast of Vancouver Island is to meet the practice of fishing by traps that is carried on on the American side at the present time. That is the object. Of course my hon. friend from Westminster (Mr. Morrison) very properly considers that this will interfere with the fishing industry, and in time will very materially affect the interests of Westminster. But the fact remains that at the present time an extensive method of trap fishing has been adopted and is in operation in the United States; and if it is true that a depletion will take place by that method, it will equally take place if practiced by American fishermen. The only remedy, and it is a complete one, is to operate this method on both sides of the line, and if the result follows as has been stated, then parties on the other side will have just as much interest as we have in coming together to consider some other method of catching fish.

Mr. SPROULE. After the fish are already caught.