

so, of course, that market is of very special concern and interest to us. We are doing everything possible to maintain our fair share of that market. I think we have succeeded, at least up until the present time. I have no special fears that we will not be able to continue to do that.

As far as domestic legislation is concerned in the United States, of course we have no control over that. I think Mr. Robichaud introduced the question to point out the effect that various subsidies and programs of such a nature in foreign countries may have on us and that it makes our position in respect of competition that much more difficult. This is certainly a very complex problem.

However, I am happy to say that generally speaking at the present moment the fish markets are stronger than they have been for some time and there is an upward trend in prices.

I am now speaking in generalities. Mr. McArthur, who is chairman of the Fisheries Prices Support Board and a member of the department is here. He would be in a position to give more detailed information to the committee at the present time on price trends over the last period, if the committee would wish him to do so.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: Mr. Chairman, before Mr. McArthur does that I have in front of me a report with which the minister is no doubt familiar. It is a report in the Toronto Daily Star of February 28 reporting a speech, which I think the minister heard, which was made at Charlottetown by the Prime Minister. The beginning of the report reads as follows:

Prime Minister Diefenbaker indicated here last night that the government will place a floor price under fish.

I wonder if the minister is yet in a position to tell us whether or not that undertaking would be implemented by the Fisheries Prices Support Board this year, and if so when and what the support would be.

Mr. MACLEAN (*Queens*): I think there are two phases to this question; one is that the legislation itself is under study having in view the possibilities of improvements. But I do not think that is the direct question which is asked. The question of price support for fish, especially certain types of fish, has been receiving very careful study over the last number of months. There was some doubt, in the minds of many people, as to what the market would be in this marketing year which is coming up. The Fisheries Prices Support Board was called into a meeting here which was held in Ottawa in the last couple of days. I have not yet had a report from them; when I do I hope to be able to make a statement in the house.

There will be a further meeting of the board in the early days of September and on that occasion it will meet in Halifax and in St. John's, Newfoundland. They will be on the site, so to speak, where there seems to be the greatest doubt as to the possibility of a strong market as far as codfish, in particular, is concerned.

Mr. CARTER: Is the minister speaking of fresh codfish or fresh and salted fish as a whole?

Mr. MACLEAN (*Queens*): Their responsibilities include both.

I might say, as I think all members of the committee know, especially as far as ground fisheries are concerned—and this applies with the greatest force to the salt cod industry—the fishermen have been caught in a price cost squeeze over the last number of years; prices have remained practically constant while costs have gone up continuously.

However, there are some other factors which should be included when considering the fisherman's position. His position is not as bad as it would be if those were the only factors operating. I am not saying his problems are