

seines. There are large bodies of water where, on account of the fact that they are frequented by fish which will not take the troll, or because the water is clear and they cannot be fished by gill nets, seines must be allowed. But they are safely guarded. The department is aware of their destructive potentialities, and large areas are set aside in which seines are not allowed to fish at all. Where they are allowed to fish, they are fully and, as they claim, harshly circumscribed by regulations. For instance, they cannot fish within half a mile of the mouth of a creek or river. There is a closed season of forty-eight hours each week, and some weeks they can fish only four days. With these restrictions they are allowed to fish in certain waters. This is quite different from the privileges allowed the traps.

In the early days seines were owned entirely by the canneries, and there was then a good deal of trouble. Now, however, the canneries and the fishermen realize that they need each other and they cooperate to some extent. There is a better feeling now, but they still fight over prices, et cetera. Conditions have changed in regard to seines. The working fisherman has gone ahead, saved and bought his own boat. He is a man of property. A fully equipped seine boat, with diesel engine and the appropriate seine, would be worth up to about \$25,000. These men have a considerable stake.

I said that there was a selfish, geographical appeal in this matter, and I can prove it. The waters of British Columbia are divided into three districts—one, two and three—regardless of electoral districts. No. 1 district is in the neighbourhood of Westminster, including the Fraser river. No. 2 district is represented by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Hanson) and takes in all the northern waters. No. 3 covers the district represented by myself and the hon. member for Vancouver North (Mr. MacNeil). It is principally in Comox-Alberni, although there is a portion in North Vancouver. If this bill passes, there will be no seining in No. 1 district; it will be entirely confined to No. 2 and No. 3. But I ask, why should it be confined to two districts? Why should it not apply to all three?

Seining is allowed in British Columbia by the law of the land, under proper restriction. I do not deny that there is keen competition, but why should the Comox-Alberni district and the Skeena and North Vancouver district carry the whole burden of seiners for 365 days of the year, and No. 1 district kick because they are asked to carry the burden for only ten days of the year—because that is

[Mr. Neill.]

all the time the seines fished there last year. It is really worse; it is not ten days; it amounts to perhaps hardly more than half of that; but at the outside it would be ten days a year. Last year they were allowed to fish ten days in No. 1 district, but on account of the weekly closed season they had only eight days.

These two runs of fish caught in these waters, under these conditions and at that time, are two separate runs, the pinks and the late sockeye, which run in a peculiar way. The sockeye run for two years running, then miss two years, and then run for two years more. The pinks run every alternate year. So it would be fair to say that on the average they run only every second year. Consequently, if fishing were allowed for three weeks every second year, it would not amount to taking off much more than an average of ten days a year during which No. 1 district is asked to carry the burden, if you like, of the seiners, while the other districts carry it for 365 days. Therefore, it is a wholly selfish appeal to one section of fishermen, and only to a part of them, located in the neighbourhood of the Fraser river and a few also in the district represented by the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Barber).

These Fraser river gill netters are not confined to district No. 1. They go up in large numbers in the summer time to the Skeena district, and fish in the Skeena river, but it is now proposed to stop No. 2 and No. 3 district seiners from coming down into No. 1 for ten days, while on the other hand No. 1 district fishermen are welcome to come up and pursue their fishing in No. 2 district.

Now, on the merits of the subject, in 1933 the dominion government allowed seining in all that area from the Fraser river down to the international boundary line, and I may say that the line is not on the land but in the water. They allowed them to come right into the mouth of the river almost, or at least up to where the muddy water came out and mixed itself up with the gulf waters. Down near the line the water is perfectly clear. In 1933, when they allowed fishing all over that area, it did do harm to the gill netters. The hon. member was right in his argument regarding that period. He brought into the house a bill which was referred to the fisheries committee, and was defeated on a nine to eight vote. I was one of the eight who voted for that bill. But conditions have changed. I would still vote for that bill if the area were the same, but it has been changed. The hon. member brought in another bill in 1936, but