

*Inspection of Canned Salmon*

I want first, however, to protest as strongly as I can against the methods used in making these changes without any reference whatever to parliament, and especially changes that are of importance and that might have serious effects. Changes are now made in the law simply by order in council and neither the fishermen concerned nor even members of parliament are aware of them until they see them in either the newspapers or the Canada Gazette. In 1930 the fisheries committee reviewed the whole of the present fishery act. Matters went along rather harmoniously at that time and after every one of us was allowed an opportunity to put forth his ideas. At that time we had a chance to speak on every clause and section. But since that time there have been dozens of changes until to-day the only parallel I can call to mind is the jig-saw puzzle. It is just about as great a puzzle to find out what the act really means as to put together one of those pictures. I ask the committee this question: What is the purpose of the fisheries committee, and why have we one at all. A few days ago the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Weir) introduced a bill concerning the inspection of hay and straw. Before that bill proceeded far it was referred to the committee on agriculture, so that full opportunity would be given for discussion. Surely in connection with fishery matters we are entitled to the same consideration; surely we should be entitled to a hearing. I maintain all matters of importance affecting the fisheries should go first of all before the fisheries committee so that full opportunity for discussion might be afforded, and so that hon. members may be in a position to make their representations.

The fishing industry should also have a specially appointed minister. To-night it would appear that we have two acting ministers of fisheries. One spoke in reply to the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, and the other is termed the acting Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Duranleau). I believe the fishing industry, involving millions of dollars and the employment of thousands of people, should have devoted to it the full time of a minister. I am bold enough to state that had the Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes) who was previously Minister of Fisheries, still been in that position, I doubt very much if these orders in council would have passed without first having the approval of the committee or of the House of Commons. I say, further, that if the hon. gentleman who is now Minister of Finance had continued to act as Minister of Fisheries, I believe he would have given that considera-

[Mr. Reid.]

tion to hon. members and to the fishing industry in general.

It might be interesting to the house to hear how some of the representations are made regarding the industry. The deputy minister for the past few years has made trips to British Columbia in the interests of the fishing industry. The Minister of Finance, when he was Minister of Fisheries, made one trip, for which we were pleased and also grateful; the British Columbia fishermen were very much pleased with the interest he displayed. When the deputy minister comes to the coast, meetings are arranged with the fishermen. There are two distinct bodies I might say in the fishing industry, namely those who are engaged in fishing and have boats and nets, and the canning interests. I am sorry there are two such distinct bodies, because I maintain the sooner they cooperate and come together the better it will be for the industry.

When the deputy minister comes out west meetings are arranged between the various bodies. I want hon. members to bear in mind, however, that while the meetings with the fishermen are open to the public and the recommendations made to the minister are broadcast, the canning interests also have a secretary in attendance taking notes. They are very cute about it. They do not hold their meetings until after the meetings with the fishermen and the deputy have been completed. Then it is that the cannery hold a secret conclave with the deputy minister all on the quiet and so put forward their resolutions and recommendations. Naturally I am very much interested in the fishermen, and still hold that interest. With that in mind I decided to go to one of the meetings of cannery, because representing a fishing constituency I thought I ought to know or hear both sides of the industry. You should have seen the look of consternation and fear when I walked into the meeting of cannery. They took fright. One of them got up and said, "Mr. Deputy, I thought this was a private meeting where we would be allowed to talk in secret with you. Is the hon. member going to be allowed to listen in?" As a result I was asked to withdraw until they had had an opportunity to discuss my presence and the whole matter. At the time I wished I had a camera, because the moment I entered the room there was a look of consternation in the faces of those men. They were preparing to put recommendations before the deputy minister in secret. In my view that is not the proper way to carry on. The cannery and fishermen who have mutual interests should have joint meetings, and at those meetings