

*Supply—Fisheries*

we shall be obliged to continue to produce salt fish as well as fresh fish and fresh frozen fish. If we allow the salt fishery to decline steadily it means that the fishermen will have only one market, as was pointed out earlier in the discussion of these estimates by the hon. member for Burin-Burgeo. We shall be dependent entirely upon what the United States market will take.

There is an opportunity for an admirable balance between the two markets. If we can maintain our market for salt fish and our markets for fresh fish, it is unlikely—it has rarely happened, except in great world depressions like that in the thirties—that the markets for both kinds of fish would go down at the same time. One year you get a good year in the fresh fish markets and more fish can be sold there. Another year you get a good year in the salt fish market and more fish can be sold there. That diversification of markets is of great advantage to the fishermen and to everybody engaged in the fisheries. It is a position that we ought jealously to guard and also to encourage in every possible way.

We know that in the British West Indies great changes are taking place. We know that in Puerto Rico great changes are taking place, and that there is an improvement in the economy of both those areas. We have reason to hope that improvement will continue. In both those areas we have seen the practical effect of the kind of aid to underdeveloped areas which this country has pioneered and which is bearing fruit there. But what that means is this. As the standards of living and the income of the people in those areas improve and, we hope, will continue to improve, they are going to want a better kind of food product. I think they are still going to want salt fish. I do not think there is any doubt about that. I am no expert on these nutritional problems, but I am told that in those hot countries salt is necessary in the diet, and that salt fish is going to continue to be required.

However, we should be preparing a better kind of product, a better packaged product, and should be experimenting with every kind of improvement so that as the standard of living rises in those areas, we can continue to satisfy the demand.

Of course the more we do in aiding the development of this area, the better; particularly in the West Indies Federation which is on the verge, one hopes, of becoming another member of the commonwealth and a united one. We know that there is a great problem there at the moment. We have high hopes of that. It seems to me that there is no area in the world outside the borders of Canada that

is so closely connected by historical, traditional, geographical and economic ties with Canada as is that particular area. Not just for the good of the salt fishery but for the good of this whole hemisphere and for the economic advantage of Canada itself, we should seek to foster closer relations between Canada and that area; I refer particularly to closer financial and economic relations. We are natural complements of one another economically. It seems to me that we should particularly seek to conserve and to exploit, in the best sense of that word, the market there for our Canadian products, and particularly for the traditional product that we have exported to that area over the years, namely salt fish. In order to do that I suggest that marketing and production research and research of all types will be required.

I have said on many occasions in the last two years that there are many areas in which the market for salt fish could be extended right here on the mainland of Canada. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has not followed in my footsteps in many respects, but in one she has. The hon. lady has continued to permit the entry to Canada every year of many thousands of Italian immigrants, all of whom are fish eaters, and most of whom are salt fish eaters. I do not believe the Department of Fisheries or the fish industry have made an adequate effort to maintain a market for our salt fish products among these new inhabitants and future citizens of Canada. Some are no longer future citizens. Most of those I admitted are now qualified for citizenship by the efflux of time, and I assume that by next year all of them will be qualified to be citizens.

Here we have a large section of our population concentrated to a very great degree in three or four metropolitan areas, Toronto, Montreal and Hamilton being the most conspicuous, accustomed to shops run by their own people, with a press of their own. It is a market that should be easy to reach and develop if we have the initiative and energy to do it. I suggest that here again there can be that combination of public and private initiative which has been characteristic of the Canadian economy in every dynamic period we have had in our history, and which is needed in this field as it is in so many others.

I dwell a great deal on the salt fish industry simply because I represent a constituency, as do most of my colleagues here from the province of Newfoundland, in which perhaps more persons are concerned with the salt fishery than with any other occupation, even the woods industry, which is the other big source of employment in Newfoundland.