

The Address—Mr. MacNaught

of an icebreaker built over thirty years ago to transport all commodities to Prince Edward Island and move our produce to the mainland.

It has been a difficult period. It has been a period in which the farmers of Prince Edward Island have suffered much—in fact, it is difficult to estimate just how much Prince Edward Island suffered during that period. So it will be with considerable satisfaction that the people of Prince Edward Island will hail the arrival of the S.S. *Abegweit* in the spring.

I wish now, Mr. Speaker, to commend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and his colleagues for putting into effect a floor price under potatoes. In early October the Canadian potato market was in a greatly depressed state. That was due in part to the unusually large crop, but it was also due to the dissemination of misleading information concerning the danger of glut. The committee of the privy council accordingly, on the advice of the agricultural prices support board, passed an order in council on October 17 giving authority to the board to purchase potatoes in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick during the crop year 1946-1947 at the following prices: first, for potatoes delivered to the board after April 30, 1947, or earlier at the direction of the board, \$1 per 75-pound bag or 80 cents a bushel on car at shipping point, bagged, tagged and inspected. There were appropriate differentials to be determined by the board for potatoes delivered at the direction of the board in bulk or otherwise than on car at shipping point; secondly, for potatoes delivered for processing, \$1.65 per barrel at factory for Canada No. 1 grade.

The passing of this order in council has had a stabilizing and salutary effect on the price of potatoes. This was particularly so in Prince Edward Island, and I am sure that, should the potato growers from New Brunswick be asked, they would give thanks to the minister and his colleagues for the passing of this order in council. Since the passing of the order the market has been firm. There has been no panic and the marketing of potatoes has gone on in an orderly fashion. This is borne out by a statement issued by the Canadian National Railways on the number of cars of potatoes ferried across the strait this season. The statement shows that up to midnight of Wednesday, January 22, 4,261 cars of the 1946 potato crop had been carried across the Northumberland strait by car ferry, assisted for a time by the S.S. *Scotia*. This was an increase of 593 cars over the corresponding period for the last twelve months.

The action of the government has put confidence into the minds of the potato growers

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and has shown them that the government meant what it said when it passed the agricultural prices support legislation.

Coming from a province where fishing is next in importance to agriculture, I feel that I must make a few brief remarks in connection with that industry, more particularly in regard to the effect the work of the fisheries research board has had on that industry. The board, operating under authority of Fisheries Research Board Act, has charge of all dominion fishery research stations in Canada and the conduct and control of investigations of practical and economic problems connected with marine and fresh water fisheries, flora and fauna.

At present the board operates six main stations, three of which deal with biological problems and three with technological problems of fisheries. In addition to the main stations, substations are operated where there is actual need for such in order to deal with special and long-term scientific problems. One of the most important of these substations is located at Ellerslie in my constituency. This station was established in 1929 to deal with the problem of restoring the valuable oyster fishery of Prince Edward Island, which had been declining for some years. Doctor A. W. H. Needler was placed in charge of this substation and, due largely to his work and that of his assistants, the problem was solved and the oyster fishery has now for some years been making most rapid recovery in reestablishing itself. The techniques and oyster cultural methods that were developed at the substation have been directly applied in connection with a scheme of oyster leasing and farming on a very large scale.

A major investigation of the lobster, which is the most valuable fishery to the greatest number of fishermen on the Atlantic coast, has been in progress for a number of years by the board and, as a result, such progressive steps as minimum size limits, specially designed traps to permit escapement of small lobsters, and other regulatory and conservation measures, have been successfully applied for the improvement of the fishery.

The development of the Irish moss industry is one of the recent outstanding examples of the ready application of results of biological work, which was largely centred at the Ellerslie substation. This industry grew from nothing a few years ago to reach a volume of about 2,300,000 pounds. Work on improved methods of curing this moss to satisfy the needs of the industrial users and to meet competition from other producing areas is still in progress.