

That is quite an important matter. If the fishing industry is organized and put on a proper working basis, it will be a long time before many of our fishermen will be able to take advantage of these improved conditions through lack of proper equipment. And if it is true that the prospects are brighter for the fishing industry, and that in the course of time conditions will improve, if it is true that the Department in conjunction, of course, with the personal initiative of the fishermen themselves, will be able to so arrange matters that the industry will be put on a proper basis, then I do not see why the fishermen should not be able to meet their obligations, why they should not be able to repay the loans. If we are going to make the fishing industry prosperous they will be in a position to repay their loans.

To my mind some system of insurance should be devised to take care of boats lost through accidents, the fishermen themselves paying the premiums.

Is the source of all this trouble, of the miserable conditions existing in the fishing industry, due to the lack of markets? Ever since the fresh fish business was established, some twenty or twenty-five years ago, and the big fish corporations were organized, and the large cold storage plants erected, we have been told on all sides that the markets have expanded tremendously. These big fish corporations that divide up the trade have opened up new markets; at least, that is what they say. We have had markets; we must have had them, but at the same time our people have had to move out. While they were enlarging the markets, our people were moving out all the time, going to the States by the thousands, fishing out from Boston and Portland.

Is it due to the lack of buyers? I do not think so. For example, around my district we have the four largest fish corporations in eastern Canada buying. They have been buying there ever since the fresh fish trade came into existence. We have no trouble in selling our fish; so that cannot be the case.

To our mind, the source of the trouble is this: the increased cost of equipment and the increased cost of living, coupled with the insufficient price secured for the fish. In Cape Breton, and some other parts of the coast of Nova Scotia, until last year haddock in the spring and summer were sold by the piece—three cents a piece and sometimes two cents. I say by the piece, not by the pound. A big haddock weighing ten or twelve pounds only brought three cents to the fishermen, sometimes only two cents. That same condition obtained again this year in Ingonish, for example. That is all the fishermen got for their fish. I am not talking about the fall prices. The fall prices are always a little better. This year, however, around my place that was not done. The haddock was bought by the pound, one cent a pound. That is for the spring and summer catch. In the fall and winter the price goes up a little higher. But it is pretty hard for fishermen to buy expensive equipment and meet the cost of living at such prices. It is impossible, and that is the reason why they are moving out all the time. And they will continue to move out unless they are able to secure better prices for their fish.

Not relying on our own judgment to find out all the whys and wherefores of the fisheries question, unable moreover to apply the remedies had we been able to diagnose the case correctly, we asked the government to investigate the whole situation, and the government was good enough to grant our request. They appointed a Royal Commission consisting of five members. We think the personnel of that Commission was well chosen. We had Mr. Bill, for example, of Lockport, who was in the fishing business for over thirty years. We had Mr. Robichaud who was in the fishing business for over twenty years and who knew conditions in New Brunswick well. We had Mr. Mumberquette, a practical fisherman, a man who does not say much, but a man of very good judgment. We had Professor Cyrus MacMillan, a man who had wide experi-