

advanced in that regard. The gill net fishermen went far out in the same area last year and in great numbers. There is no difficulty about the canneries not having sufficient fish. It is a question now of other districts having been depleted, and the cannery men and the seine boat owners saying, "Here is one large area, allow us to fish there."

Mr. A. W. NEILL (Comox-Alberni): I do not think the house should pass this bill unless we hear some more substantial arguments in favour of it than have been presented to-night. While much of what the hon. member said was correct, a good deal of it was beside the point, such as the matter of inspection by brokers; and other parts of it were predicated on conditions as they existed six years ago and which no longer exist today.

I see three substantial objections to the bill. In the first place, the passing of the bill, nay, even the introduction of it, is going to be used as an argument—an unsound argument if you will, but nevertheless an argument—in favour of those few individuals in British Columbia who want to maintain the traps at Sooke. The question of fish traps is sub judice; that is, it is referred to a committee and therefore it is not debatable here. But the fishermen out there are dissatisfied over the introduction of this bill. There was a meeting of the United Fishermen's Union in Vancouver recently, and the statement was made there:

Meantime Mr. Tom Reid, M.P., is reported to have brought down a bill which will, if passed, ban purse-seining on the gulf of Georgia off the Fraser river mouth. The P.C.F.U. and the S.P.S.U. both protest that Mr. Reid should not bring in such a bill at this time, but should devote all his efforts to the fight against fish traps.

At another meeting of the two fishing bodies, a speaker, discussing the same subject, said:

The fact that 105 seine boats fish in the gulf for 12 days each season, during slack time up north, has little effect on the catches of the gillnetters of the Fraser river. He said that the old antagonism between seiners and the gillnetters and between other various branches of the fishing industry is dying out.

Then a paper called the *Fisherman*, which I think more truly represents the working fisherman than any of the fishery papers published in Vancouver, had an editorial on fish traps in which there appeared this paragraph:

We regret that Mr. Tom Reid, unwittingly or otherwise, also played into the hands of the operators and acted against the best

interests of the fishermen when he chose such a time to put forward his bill to eliminate seining in the gulf.

This bill will merely make a selfish, local, geographical appeal to one class of fishermen located in the district of New Westminster. It does not forbid seining in British Columbia; it only forbids seining in a small area of a small district. If the opposition to seining were genuine, we would expect to find opposition to seining all over British Columbia; but the hon. member himself admitted twice to-night in his speech that seining must be allowed in the waters of British Columbia. In other words, he is willing to allow seining all over that province provided it is kept out of his district.

There are three methods of commercial fishing in British Columbia—and I am leaving out fish traps, which is not a method of fishing at all, but has been aptly defined, at a meeting of the Olympia legislature, as grand larceny of the fishing industry and a rape of mother nature. Leaving that aside, however, there are three methods of commercial fishing. These methods are; first, trolling, which must not be confounded with trawling, and which is an amplification of the hook and line, which system we are all in favour of because it gives the greatest employment to the greatest number of fishermen and promotes a breed of fine independent fishermen. It does not cost a great deal of money, with hard work and economy, to get the necessary boat and gear, and you could not get a better class of fisherman than the independent troller. But it would be impossible to confine fishing to trollers only because they can catch only two of the five or six varieties of fish. There are only two varieties that take the bait on the hook, and therefore we have to fall back on the gill net, which is a long net that floats with the tide or the current. The fish run up against it and try to go through it, and, as the name implies, they get caught by the gills and are captured. The gill net catches any variety of fish, but it cannot operate in clear water. The water must be muddy or discoloured because, if it is clear, the fish can see the net and readily dive under it and so escape.

It is admitted by my hon. friend himself that the seines do form a certain part of industrial fishing there. It is not the most desirable method of fishing and can be made destructive. The policy of the department is, therefore, that where certain waters can be fished adequately by the gill net or by trolling, the use of seines should be forbidden in that area. But they must allow