

*Supply—Fisheries*

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I simply mentioned the fact that what the government is saving on the one hand it is more than spending on the other.

**Mr. Fulton:** If my hon. friend wants to look at it in that way. If my hon. friend thinks we should not spend this money then, of course, the opportunity is open to him to act accordingly.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I have no objection. I am just pointing out the attitude of the minister; the zest he has now is different from what he had before.

**Mr. Fulton:** No, I have equal zest in recommending this because I think we can fully justify it as I could justify the reduction in the other item.

Item agreed to.

181. Bankruptcy Act administration, \$48,985.

**The Chairman:** This item was allowed to stand earlier. Shall the item now carry?

**Mr. Fulton:** The answer to the question asked by the hon. member for New Westminster and the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary I think I should now furnish to the committee. In 1956, there were 3,849 bankruptcies; to the end of November, 1957 there were 3,010 bankruptcies.

**Mr. Hahn:** Is the minister in a position to give me the reasons behind those bankruptcies?

**Mr. Fulton:** I am informed that in this department we do not keep statistics of the nature which the hon. gentleman requests. Our interest in the matter is to ensure that the estates which are bankrupt are properly administered in accordance with the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act, but we do not keep statistics with regard to the causes of bankruptcy, the type of business in the bankruptcy courts, and so on. If those sorts of statistics are maintained I believe they would be obtainable through the bureau of statistics.

Item agreed to.

**The Chairman:** That completes the estimates of the Department of Justice.

## DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

General services—

139. Departmental administration, \$319,700.

**The Chairman:** We shall now deal with the estimates of the Department of Fisheries, beginning with item 139 on page 29, with the details on page 215.

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Minister of Fisheries):** Mr. Chairman, over the years it has been customary for the Minister of Fisheries to make a brief review of the state of the fishing

industry on the first item of his estimates. I think it is a useful practice, and it is my intention to follow it in a brief way. I realize, of course, that in one sense it is a dangerous practice because if all hon. members of the committee avail themselves of the opportunity which I am taking at the present time perhaps it would have the effect of defeating my purpose in making these brief remarks because my purpose in making them is that I may thereby be of some assistance to the committee in examining carefully the estimates of my department.

Since becoming minister it has been my attempt to become as familiar as possible with this important Canadian industry. In an endeavour to familiarize myself with the establishments of the department and of the industry itself throughout the country a few months ago I visited the east and the west coasts. At a later time I hope to be able to visit the industry of the inland waters of this country, which is a very important one, and also the industry in the province of Quebec. I hope to be able especially to visit the Gaspé area and the Magdalen islands because in the Magdalen islands, and they are neighbours of mine, fishing is of prime importance. It will, therefore, be a pleasure for me to visit that area when the opportunity presents itself.

The fishing industry, of course, is not one of Canada's largest or, by some measures, most important industries—that is, if you wish to measure it in the value of the products produced—but it is an industry that is of prime importance. It has a great history and I believe it has a great future. The fishing industry was the first industry in this country after the explorers of Europe found that two continents stood in their way when they tried to reach the Far East by sailing west. On finding that fish were plentiful, fishing became the first industry in which Europeans engaged in this country, followed of course shortly afterwards by the fur trade. It is an industry like agriculture; that is, more of a human industry with more problems than many of our highly mechanized industries. In dealing with the problems of the fisheries we are dealing with the livelihood of a large number of men and women who work closely with nature, and whose livelihood is subject to a great variety of uncertainties. Those uncertainties extend all the way from the catching of the fish to the marketing of the final product.

In the speech from the throne mention was made of the government's intention to strive to secure additional markets for the products of our fisheries. Responsibility for foreign markets rests with my colleague, the