

Supply—Fisheries

I must say I was somewhat surprised when I read in the *St. John's Daily News* an account, which was rather more extensive on this one point than the accounts which appeared in most of the mainland papers, of the Prime Minister's famous press conference on his return from London last July. The hon. member for Charlotte put this on record during the debate on the address, referring to the Prime Minister's comment on the proposed European free trade area that, as long as agriculture was excluded, the Canadian government had no anxiety about it. The Prime Minister was asked about fisheries, and said he thought the fisheries did not matter.

I am not trying to misconstrue what the Prime Minister said; I do not think for a moment he meant that the fisheries did not matter at all. What he meant was that he considered no fishery interest was involved. I am not sure that that was not a rather hasty judgment with regard to the common market, and I would therefore urge the minister and the Minister of Trade and Commerce to look into this matter.

And now I should like to say just a word about one or two observations which were made in this house during the debate on the address by the hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg, an hon. member of this house who has probably not had very much experience, and who did me the great honour of thanking me for the assistance I gave him in his election. I assure the hon. gentleman that any assistance I gave him was entirely involuntary; if I did assist him I did not mean to, and I will try my best to undo it on the next occasion.

Mr. Chown: Everything you do is involuntary.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am not, as the hon. gentleman would appear to be, a Marxist or any other kind of determinist. I am one of those who believe in freedom and free will. However, we had perhaps better not become involved in philosophical discussions. As I say, the hon. member suggested that I helped him to win his election. I am not going to argue further with him about that, but if I did I did not mean to do so, and I will do my best not to do it again.

What did rather shock me about what the hon. gentleman said was his reference to one of the factors which, he said, was responsible for the fate of his distinguished predecessor, who even as a young member made his mark very quickly in this house. He suggested that because his distinguished predecessor had supported certain developments of the Department of Fisheries in

the province of Newfoundland, and particularly, the establishment of the experimental salt fish plant at Valleyfield, which happens to be in my constituency, this had helped the hon. gentleman to get elected.

Well, sir, I have a higher opinion of the hon. gentleman's constituents than he seems to have. I have visited his constituency on many occasions. I shall never forget my first visit to his constituency, because it was my first visit to Nova Scotia and it took place something over 20 years ago. I crossed Nova Scotia from Windsor to Chester and went into a part of the hon. gentleman's constituency, and that was at a time when we had just finished enjoying five years of Tory government.

Mr. Sinclair: Enjoying?

Mr. Pickersgill: Well, of course, the hon. gentleman is anticipating. We had just finished enjoying five years of Tory government, and in that constituency at that time I did not see a single painted building. I went back there again after the war and I have been back there since, and there is no part of Canada that looks more prosperous today than the county of Lunenburg.

An hon. Member: How many are painted in your riding?

Mr. Crouse: You are stating that you visited Lunenburg county and did not see a single painted building. At what time did you visit it? In 1938?

Mr. Sinclair: In Bennett's time.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was well over 20 years ago.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): That must have been in Mackenzie King's time.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was in the year 1936. I am not sure whether the hon. gentleman was born then.

Mr. Sinclair: The way he behaves suggests that he was not.

Mr. Nowlan: He is not as juvenile as you, anyway.

Mr. Pickersgill: However, if the hon. gentleman will talk to his neighbours who were adults in 1934, 1935 and 1936 and ask them how conditions at that time would compare with conditions when he was elected to parliament last summer, I know perfectly well what answer he will get.

Mr. Sinclair: Tory times are hard times.

Mr. Cardiff: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question? What has this to do with the estimates of the department before us?