

The hon. gentleman read a letter which he had received from Australia. Just what his point was in reading that letter I could not quite see; I followed him with some care, but I did not just see the application. He now disclaims any suggestion that his reason was that the pack was inferior. The letter referred to this: Canadian canned salmon had been shipped to Australia and it was labelled "pinks" or "chums" or whatever quality it was, but some unscrupulous individual or dealer in Australia took the labels off and put on others indicating that it was first-class red salmon, sockeye, although it was not sockeye and it was not first-class red salmon, so that this admittedly inferior salmon was being marketed in Australia as No. 1 fresh, thus injuring our reputation in that market. Officers of my department were brought into contact with the matter and it was taken up with the Australian government and adjusted, I think quite satisfactorily, because the Australian government would not knowingly countenance anything of the kind.

Further, suggestions have come from Great Britain as to the inferiority of the pack. I am sorry that the matter comes up in this form, because we are simply giving publicity to it and probably doing still further injury to the reputation of our salmon. We are exceedingly jealous of the standard of our products, not only canned fish but other commodities, but now that we are discussing this, I am referring to canned salmon. We feel it is our duty to do everything we can to maintain the high standard of that product. We want the people abroad to feel that when a Canadian official inspection certificate goes with a shipment, it will carry the same weight abroad as would grain shipment certificates. That is what we are seeking to do, and what we have done was with one desire and one object only, namely, to achieve that end.

In regard to the fishermen, let me say this: no fisherman is forced to take his catch to any one cannery, as was urged. On the contrary, as I have already indicated, he is at liberty to take his fish to any cannery within the sailing distance mentioned in the order, and without doubt he will have the chance of any one of at least a dozen canneries where he can market his product. I can give more detail of what has been going on with regard to the practice that I have mentioned of these collecting boats going out, but I do not think it is desirable to do so. I do not wish to stir up undue controversy, but I should like to impress upon the house that what I have said is our object, our desire.

My hon. friend referred a moment ago to wheat. He said: What would you think if we were to pass a law saying that our wheat had to be taken to one elevator? In the first place wheat is not a perishable article like fish; it is an entirely different kind of product; and in the second place, as I have already shown to the house, there is no such limitation.

Let me say to my hon. friend and to the house that the government is disposed to give the fullest consideration to any reasonable representations that may be made as to, shall I say, the adverse effects of this order, if there are any such. We are quite prepared to receive those representations and to give them every consideration. I deplore the extreme terms in which the hon. member for Comox-Alberni put forward his case. It is very difficult to administer fisheries; there are conflicting interests. I deplore the reflection upon the cannery interests, because I believe on the whole the men operating the canneries on the Pacific coast are doing the best they can for the trade in which they are engaged. That their interests at times conflict with those of the fishermen, would be expected, and they undoubtedly do. But I want to assure the house that there was no ulterior motive, no attempt to put something over. This was not done in the dark; it was done in the open and for the good of the industry, and we believe it will be beneficial thereto. At the same time I say again that should there be any representations it is desired to make, the government will be pleased to receive them.

Mr. THOMAS REID (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my protest with that of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill), even at the risk of incurring the wrath of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Stevens) and even though I may be blamed by him for taking up some time, although I shall not take an hour and a half. I believe what has happened regarding these orders in council and the conditions affected by them warrant the attention of the house being called to the whole matter. I have not many remarks to make about the particular order in council to which the hon. member for Comox-Alberni referred and covered fully and to which the Minister of Trade and Commerce replied. I wish to speak with especial reference to another order in council that has been passed and that is, I believe, more harmful in its effect and will certainly do more damage to those engaged in the industry than the order in council which has just been under review.