

whether the process used for drying lobster is the same process that is employed by Sir Joseph Flavelle, for drying bacon.

Mr. McKENZIE: Is there a standard measure for lobster cans?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The cans are not standardized by law, but by practice. Cans of certain sizes have been in use in the lobster industry in Nova Scotia for a great number of years.

Mr. McKENZIE: It would strike me, Mr. Chairman, that when we legislate that a can shall contain fourteen ounces and then discover that a can which has been in use for a great many years is not big enough to hold that quantity, the logical thing would be to insist upon a larger can and not cut down the statutory weight. What is the good of saying in our legislation that there must be fourteen ounces of lobster meat in a can, and then drop the legislation and say, "Oh, we forgot, the can is too small?" I think it is altogether illogical.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The statutory requirement was to the effect that a one-pound can should contain fourteen ounces avoirdupois. That is rather paradoxical in itself, and anomalous, because the public would be very apt to expect sixteen ounces avoirdupois in a pound can. When the statute referred to a pound can, what was contemplated was the standardized can in use in that particular trade in the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland. The House of Commons and the Fisheries Committee knew that it was not possible to get sixteen ounces into a can. My hon. friend is quite right as to the desirability of making the can larger so that it would hold very much more meat. The question therefore is, will you prescribe the exact weight of lobster meat which can go into the standardized can, or will you change the standard can and put in more lobster? I am quite content to have the committee settle the matter.

Mr. McKENZIE: What my hon. friend says reminds me of a case in which I was trying to help a man to get a little money to build a better house, and I was giving as an argument that the man's wife had to get down on her knees to go through the door, and the reply was made: "That would not bother me; let him get a shorter wife." I think we should be logical about this matter and protect the consuming public. There are comparatively few packers and exporters, and there are millions of people who buy cans of lobster. As protect-

[Mr. Dechène.]

ing this very large number of people we said, "When you go to the store to buy a pound can of lobster you will get fourteen ounces of meat." Well, the public have a right to believe it because we have put it on our statutes, and there it is. Our only excuse is that we have found we made a mistake, that the can is not big enough, and we cannot make a bigger one. But the public will not accept that as a logical protection to the man who is consuming this very excellent and useful food. I think myself we will have to acknowledge we have made a mistake and should never have passed that statute, or else we should live up to it.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: That is done away with by the evidence of the member for Northumberland, who states that he has been able to put fourteen ounces of lobster meat in his cans. The can now used by the lobster packers in the Maritime Provinces has been in use for many years. The member for Northumberland has the reputation of being a good packer, and one of the reasons why his goods are in demand all over the country is that his cans contain honest quantities. It has been contended by the packers that a can should not contain sixteen ounces of lobster meat because there must be some liquid in the can in order to preserve the meat, and the quantity of liquid necessary was arrived at as two ounces. The experience of the member for Northumberland corroborates that; two ounces of liquid is sufficient in his business, leaving fourteen ounces of dry meat. The size of the can, therefore, has nothing to do with this legislation; we are making this change simply because the lobster packers have asked us to do so. The only question now before us is this: Is the House of Commons going to surrender to a lobster combine?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: If this matter is considered by a committee, it will be competent for the committee to have packers and consumers appear before it, and judge of the merits of the case. Surely it is not asking too much to suggest that we pass the resolution so that the Bill may soon come before the Marine and Fisheries Committee.

Mr. DUFF: Why is it necessary to call the packers and the consumers here at great expense to themselves and to the country when we have the evidence on Hansard now? It would be better for the minister, when he brings down his Bill, to make the amount fourteen ounces instead of twelve.