

*Sockeye Salmon Industry—Mr. Barber*

These methods have been tried again and again by the biological board but nothing has been done to see whether they can be improved upon in any way. Sockeye rearing has been condemned owing to the excessive cost; it will be observed that the whole argument in this order in council turns on the question of cost. And notwithstanding this, no attempt has been made, nor has any suggestion been put forward, looking towards economy.

Mr. MICHAUD: Who makes that statement?

Mr. BARBER: I make that statement. I have gone through the whole report, which I have studied carefully, and I do not think you can find one suggestion as to any means by which the cost might be reduced. I want to call attention to the way in which the biological board arrived at the figures given in regard to the percentage of migrants as compared with eggs planted. If you will refer to the reports of the different superintendents from year to year you will get an idea as to just how these figures are arrived at by the board. So many eggs are planted in the different streams. They are counted, the operators know how many have been planted, and then the migrants as they leave the lake are also counted; and on the basis of so many migrants from so many million eggs they arrive at the percentage given in the order in council.

At one o'clock the house took recess.

The house resumed at three o'clock.

Mr. BARBER: When the house took recess, Mr. Speaker, I was dealing with the order in council, and I said it was based on a report of the biological board. The reason for disposing of the hatcheries of British Columbia was given as the cost of carrying them on, and I want to refer particularly to the figures upon which this order in council was based, because I am going to try to show that they are not well founded and that the minister might very well make further inquiries before taking this action. I want to refer to the report of the Department of Fisheries for 1934-35, at page 111. There I find the report of the superintendent of the Cultus lake hatchery, in which he calls attention to the planting of eyed sockeye eggs in tributaries to the lake. He says:

The distribution above mentioned commenced on December 20, 1933, and was completed on February 24, 1934. Approximately thirty-

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three per cent of the total number of eggs planted were deposited in Spring creek. This stream, as its name implies, is fed by natural springs, is not subject to freshets, and eggs planted therein should give good results.

Further on he says:

The remainder of the hatchery output was deposited in other tributaries to Cultus lake, and although the areas planted were thoroughly cultivated and properly prepared for reception of the eggs, it is impossible to protect against damage from freshets and resultant scouring of the beds of these streams.

With this in mind I should like to deal with three abortive attempts at egg planting, which was first tried in 1928. In that year scientists connected with the biological board, along with the superintendent of the hatchery, looked over the creeks to decide where the eggs should go. They insisted in putting the bulk of the eggs in Frost creek, and this was done. The creek dried up about half a mile above the lake, and the fry were unable to get down. The return of 0.95 per cent, which it will be noticed appears in this order in council in connection with that work, was the result almost entirely of the few eggs that were planted in Spring creek. In 1933 egg planting was repeated and the eggs were put into Windfall creek and Watt creek, which were not dependable. Heavy freshets in March washed practically the whole of them out with the exception of those planted in Spring creek. The count of migrants from the egg planting of 1933 shows a percentage of 4.67, or a total of 242,458. But that number of migrants was not the result of the 4,371,500 eggs planted; that was the result of 1,259,000 eggs which were planted in Spring and Smiths Falls creeks. This would show the percentage to be 19, rather 4.67. Destruction of these eggs is well authenticated, and the minister would have no trouble in securing these figures, because I understand the biological board kept track of all the eggs planted in the different creeks. But in coming to make up their percentages they said there were so many eggs planted, without caring whether they were planted in potato fields or by the side of the road; they were not interested where the eggs were planted but only interested in the result. They said so many migrants resulted, and they figured the result to be 4.67 per cent. If, on the other hand, they had only counted those eggs that had a chance to hatch the figure would be about 19 per cent.

Again in 1934 and 1935 they insisted that the eggs be planted as was done in 1933, and again all the eggs, with the exception of those planted in Spring creek, were destroyed through the creeks drying up. This information, as I have said, is available to the minister. Why was it not checked up before