

Supply—Fisheries and Forestry

of the moss, and thereby interfere with its regrowth. I suggest that some experiments be carried out to see whether there is a real danger from this raking process and, if there is, that regulations be immediately introduced to see that the industry is not destroyed.

From this Irish moss comes a very valuable extract which is known as carrageen. Carrageen is in great demand and its value today is from \$1.75 to \$3 per pound. Its uses are almost limitless. In the food processing industry alone it is used by the makers of chocolate milk, minute breakfast foods, ice cream, pie fillings, confectionary, beer, desserts, salad dressings, flavourings, and a host of other foods. It has many other uses.

• (3:50 p.m.)

The important point for the department to note, Mr. Chairman, is that there is no plan in Canada for the extraction of carrageen from Irish moss. The dry moss which we harvest near our own shores has to be exported either to the United States or Denmark. The valuable byproduct carrageen is extracted from the moss and then shipped back to Canada to be used here. That is not as it should be.

It is estimated that a commercially profitable extraction plant could be supported by an annual supply of 16 million pounds of wet moss. Last year in the maritime provinces we harvested, as I said before, 79 million pounds of wet moss. Conceivably therefore we could have supported at least four, or possibly five, extraction plants in the maritime area. The substance could have been extracted right here and we could have been exporting it at anywhere from \$1.75 to \$3 a pound, rather than importing it after the moss had been exported to Denmark or the United States and the carrageen extracted there. I suggest that we could have here a very nice little industry in the maritime provinces, and I recommend it to the appropriate department of government for serious consideration.

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, under normal circumstances I would not take the time of the house to comment on the estimates of a cabinet colleague. In this particular case however I feel I have some distinct and unique responsibilities and a particular interest, since I am the minister from Newfoundland. For that reason I ask this house, or this committee, to allow me some time to sketch at least some of the background to what has been, in my view, quite properly

[Mr. McQuaid.]

described as a crisis in the Newfoundland fishing industry.

I wish to compliment the speakers who have preceded me today, and I particularly wish to commend the hon. members for Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare and Bonavista-Trinity-Conception for the moderate tones of their comments and the worth-while suggestions they have advanced. I will say at once that I am not disposed to disagree with them in their references to the long time neglect of the fishing industry.

Mr. Crouse: Mr. Chairman, I think the minister was mistaken when he referred to the hon. member for Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare. I represent South Shore.

Mr. Jamieson: I beg your pardon. I ought to have referred to the hon. member for South Shore. They keep changing the names of constituencies and I find it hard to keep track of them all. In any event, I was saying that I would not disagree with the remarks of hon. members in their complaints about the traditional neglect of the fisheries. I think that is quite correct.

I do dispute the argument that this has been governmental neglect. I do not say that in the sense that either one party or another is responsible. It seems to me that one of the difficulties we have had in Canada for a long time is that there has been a lack of awareness on the part of the population generally of the importance of the fishery. There has been a failure on the part of information services of government and elsewhere to convey to the Canadian population the figures which were quoted this morning by the hon. member for South Shore as to the economic importance of this industry to our nation. So I have no cause to dispute what has been suggested here in that regard.

Looking back to the beginning of the fresh frozen fish industry, however, it is obvious that with notable exceptions there has been a very sizeable amount of government investment, both provincial and federal, in getting this industry going and actually creating it in the first place. I was looking today at some of the expenditures which have been made from time to time at both provincial and federal levels. It is quite surprising, for one who is not deeply involved in the industry, to see the extent to which government participation has created plants, contributed to their survival or has been the instrument for transferring the ownership of plants for the expenditure of as little as \$1 or sometimes a few dollars more.