

as to the new departure in policy on the part of the department. I say to him that it has a good many features to commend itself, but I ask him if he would make that statement in Nova Scotia on the eve of an election? Is it the considered policy of the department that the propagation of the beam trawler should have the support and blessing of the department? The establishment of a sample trawler, the *J. J. Cowie*, owned by the department is itself a new departure in policy on the part of the department. I think we ought to know if the department, without having announced it, is now committed to the policy of the beam trawler. I should like a specific declaration from the minister, because whether he calls it a beam trawler or any other name it means the same thing. Is it now the policy of the fisheries department to advocate the use and operation by Nova Scotia fishermen of this mechanical type of fishing boat in order that there may be more production? That is the ground upon which the minister makes his statement. He referred also to continuity of production. I agree that these are important elements. I agree that it is necessary that fish should be landed in a proper condition before transportation because transportation to the central markets of Canada is long. I agree with continuity of supplies so that the dealers in the various centres and the housewives should know with some degree of certainty whether they can rely on an adequate supply of fish from week to week or day to day as the case may be. The minister having made his statement, I think the time has arrived when there must be a statement of government policy on this important matter. I shall continue to press for it until I get an answer affirmatively or negatively before this item passes.

Mr. HILL: My county is very much interested not in the deep sea fishing but in deep sea fish that are caught in inland waters. The minister brought up a point which I think is most important, namely, that these fish should be kept in proper shape for marketing. What plans has the department for establishing cold storage plants in which these fresh fish could be kept fresh until it is possible to place them on the Canadian market? At the present time in my county the only possible market for fish is the United States market. They are transported by truck because the nearest cold storage plant is fifty miles away in the city of Saint John. What has the department in the way of plans for cold storage plants along the coast so that the fish caught in the bay of Fundy and New

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

Brunswick waters can be kept in cold storage until such time as they are marketed?

In addition to that I wish to point out that unless a floor price is put under fish and maintained after the war we shall go back to the same very bad conditions we had during the thirties, when fish dropped as low as forty cents a hundred pounds for the very finest type of fish, haddock, cod and pollock. That is less than half a cent a pound. The price remained there for several years and the condition of fishermen in my county became deplorable. Their boats were absolutely worn out. They did not have sufficient funds on which to live, let alone repair their boats and their gear was entirely gone by the time four or five years of these conditions had gone by. It was not because there was not sufficient market for the fish; it was because the buyers took advantage of the conditions to force the fishermen to sell their fish at a ridiculous price. This low price at which the fish were purchased did not give the fish to the consumer at a lower price, because in the city of Montreal they still had to pay twenty-five or thirty cents a pound for the fresh fish at a time they were selling at half a cent a pound to the producers. The only protection that I know the fishermen can possibly have against exploitation by the buyers is for the government to step in and set a floor price under the fish.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I want a declaration of policy from the minister with respect to the use of mechanical fishing boats. I want to know what he is going to do with this brief of the maritime fishermen's union to which attention was drawn by the hon. junior member for Halifax.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Golding): Order. I do not believe these matters come under this item.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I suggest that this has to do with deep sea fishing.

Mr. KINLEY: I agree, Mr. Chairman, but the minister himself introduced the dragger into the discussion, and I want to say something about this matter. We have an item here that has to do with deep sea fisheries. I think that is a misnomer, and the minister agrees. I wanted to say something about these experiments; I thought that would be out of order, but the minister interjected it and it seems to me we shall have to go on with the discussion.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): If the ruling is that we cannot go on with the discussion under this item, then I want to know where