

## Newfoundland

Quebec and maritime fishermen. Surely it is time the Fisheries Act was amended to preclude any such results. For the benefit of members of the house, and fishermen generally, I believe an explanation as to the way the bounty was established might be in order. I am aware that most fishermen know very little about it and I confess that I did not myself until a few days ago. I am indebted to the Department of Fisheries for the information that I have received and I think it should be a matter of record.

This bounty to the fishermen is known as the Halifax award. It was established by the treaty of Washington which was entered into in 1871 between the United Kingdom and the United States. Under that treaty United States fishermen were permitted to take fish off the coast of the maritime provinces, Quebec and Newfoundland for a certain term of years. For that privilege the United States paid \$5,500,000 to the British government. The British government then paid \$1 million of the award to Newfoundland and \$4,500,000 to Canada.

The Canadian payment was placed in the consolidated revenue fund and after \$500,000 had been deducted as expenses the net amount of \$4 million was recognized as the payment received by Canada for the grant of these fisheries concessions. In 1882 parliament made provision for an annual grant of \$150,000 for the purposes noted in the act, and that sum was later raised to \$160,000. It is from this grant that the annual fishing bounties have since been paid.

That summary is taken from the report of the royal commission on fisheries which sat in 1927, which report goes on to say:

From the House of Commons debates of 1882 when the resolution upon which was founded the legislation of 1882 was passed, it is plain that this annual grant was regarded as the interest upon the amount of the Halifax Award.

As I said in the beginning, the amount of money available for the purposes of paying this annual bounty is now \$160,000. Fishing is the largest single industry in Newfoundland, and if under this agreement all the Newfoundland fishermen are to be eligible for payments under that grant, and if no additional money is to be disbursed, it will mean that the grants to Quebec and the maritime fishermen will be cut down.

I suggest that our Fisheries Act should be amended in order that the amount of the grant may be increased so that grants now paid would not be cut down because of the Newfoundland fishermen coming under the provisions. I should like to ask the minister if the governor in council have not the necessary power under the regulations to

increase this amount. The regulations are to be found in P.C. 5366 of 1947, section 14 of which reads:

The amount of the bounty to be paid to fishermen and owners of boats and vessels will be fixed from time to time by the governor in council.

I am making these remarks in order to get a definite and specific answer from the minister. The fishing industry is very important to the whole of Canada and at the present time it is facing many difficulties. If we are to bring in another large group of fishermen then I think it is time the Canadian government began to pay more attention to this industry than has been paid in the past.

I want to give some credit to the Minister of Fisheries. He comes from the west coast and when he took office he had not had very much experience. Immediately after being appointed he took his duties quite seriously and made a trip across Canada and today I think he knows a great deal about the industry. I hope the cabinet will have just as serious views in connection with this basic industry as has the minister.

As in practically every industry, a fight is going on now in the fishing industry. It has reached the stage where mechanization is the order of the day. A struggle is going on between the shore fishermen and the trawlers which will have to be settled. I think it is the obligation of the government to view that particular angle very closely. The fishermen claim that the trawlers are depleting and destroying the industry. That is the assertion that has been made to me and if it is true it is the responsibility of the government to see that the industry is not destroyed.

The best methods will have to be found to perpetuate this industry because it is an important food industry and deserving of much more consideration than it has had in the past. With the bringing in of another large group of fishermen, with the fight that is going on between owners and fish dealers and those engaged in the industry, I think the time is ripe for a thorough examination of the whole question. I should like the minister to answer the questions I have posed.

**Mr. Mayhew:** Mr. Chairman, I shall not at this time attempt to answer the hon. member for Cape Breton South, but I shall start out by answering the question that was put to me last night by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I am pleased indeed to have an opportunity to speak briefly about the Newfoundland fisheries.

As all hon. members well know, the fishing industry is the oldest industry on the island. But it is more than that; it is by far the most