

March 24, 1947

[Mr. Job gave notice that he would on tomorrow move that the Report of the Fisheries Committee be presented]

Mr. Job I make that motion, but suggest that, with the consent of the House, we might proceed

with the report today. It has been circulated, and it is going to be read in sections, and after that, with the consent of the whole House, I suggest we go on debating it.

[The motion carried]

Report of the Fisheries Committee:¹

Committee of the Whole

Mr. Chairman I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the object of a committee is not to debate principles, but to discuss and correct details of the bill or report which may be before the House. As there are several of those reports to consider and some are of considerable length, I suggest we confine ourselves so far as possible to details of the report and not the matter of general principles, upon which perhaps more extensive speeches may be required.

Mr. Job This Fisheries Report consists of some 160 pages, including the appendices; the report itself consists of 68 pages. In introducing it I would like to take into consideration some advice I noticed in this morning's newspaper. It says, "When the reports are introduced it is to be hoped that comment will be brief and pointed, designed to bring out the truth rather than let constituents know that their delegates are doing their job." I think that a good remark and I want to set a good example by being short.

I would like to refer to the serious loss this Committee sustained by the serious illness of Mr. Brown, who was a great strength with his great knowledge of fisheries; it was really a bad blow when he had to discontinue his work. Then again, we were deprived of the services of our present worthy Chairman with his knowledge of the fisheries. I hope when you consider the report you will bear these things in mind and realise we have been handicapped. We have not been having the best of our talent.

The main object of all these reports is to determine by the presentation of facts and figures whether the country is and will continue to be self-supporting. By the term "self-supporting" I mean not only whether it can balance its budget, but also whether the country, if it stands alone, can expect to provide a decent living and social services for its 300,000-odd inhabitants. I would say that perhaps the most important feature of this

report is contained on page 38 which sums up the value of fisheries during the year 1946. The figures show the total value of our fisheries during the calendar year 1946 was roughly \$34.5 million, which includes an estimated \$1 million worth of fish consumed by our own population.

We have received great assistance from the Newfoundland Fisheries Board as well as from the Customs Department in arriving at these figures, and they can be taken as reasonably accurate.

However, it is one thing to arrive at today's valuation, which as we all know is a very much inflated one, but it is quite another matter to arrive at reliable figures for future years. The Committee has (probably very rashly) mentioned a figure of \$24 million as a possible average. This is actually a pure guess, and by some people may be considered on the optimistic side. It will be obvious to everyone that there are so many future contingencies over which we have little or no control that no estimate of this sort can really be relied upon.

I would like to point out two features of the report which I think will be specially interesting to members of the Convention, as they may come as a surprise. I refer to the sub-committee report in the appendix on the matter of subsidiary fisheries which shows a value of \$2.6 million; and also the report on by-products which shows a value of nearly \$1.7 million. These two branches of the industry especially seem to be capable of very material development. Our hope seems to be in the further development of markets for fresh and frozen fish and for canned products, as a relief for the salt codfish industry, and also in the further development of our herring fishery which would seem to have scope for very large development if properly encouraged, and by that I mean research work.

We have been fortunate in having the New-

¹Volume II:181.