

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., May 11, 1962

## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Fisheries Pose Huge Problem

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THIS WEEK'S stories of lobster fishermen along many miles of our Northern coastline worrying about possible heavy losses to traps and other fishing gear from ice which has covered it completely, emphasizes a feeling that something is wrong with a situation which creates such a situation.

The severe ice conditions which have existed now for two years in a row in Fisheries District 7B have caused some serious speculation among veteran fishermen as to the feasibility of attempting Lobster operations as early as May 1.

I talked to Fisheries Minister Leo Rossiter yesterday and he is deeply concerned about the losses so many of the fishermen face, and I know he would like to see something done to remedy the situation, although he recognizes the difficulties.

THERE ARE indications that late ice may continue to cause trouble to the Lobster fishery, for "oceanographers tell us the average sea temperatures in this part of our fishery have cooled five degrees in the last 15 years," technical fisheries people tell me.

And almost every year, lobstermen are beset with the problems of abnormally high cost for bait with prices running as high as \$16 to \$18 not at all unusual in the early days of the season. And this abnormal cost - it compares with bait at six to seven dollars later - certainly plays a major role in cutting profits on even the best season.

Sea water is usually so cold in early season that Lobsters trap poorly and the returns per tray are much lower than they are later when the water gets warmer.

So fishermen often incur the highest operational costs over a period when returns or landings are much lower than they are later on.

### More Money In Short Season

FISHERMEN also recall the experience of last year when they were confined in approximately a five-week lobster fishery by ice conditions that were even more severe than they are this spring. Yet many fishermen insist they cleared more money than they did in many of the other years.

This, practical fisheries men tell me, was due to the fact that their operations and expenses extended only five weeks, instead of eight. In the five weeks they used less bait, less gasoline, and had consistently good fishing pretty well through the entire period.

On the other hand they maintain that in warmer springs, when the season gets in full swing by May 1, the final two or three weeks of fishing are merely an expense, since most of the lobsters are caught by that time.

IT IS for reasons like these that many of our Lobstermen think it is time responsible people took a serious look at this question of fishing seasons. They suggest a frank and widespread discussion of the problem by fishermen in the 7B area might very well result in a recommendation in the federal department of fisheries, to consider a later opening of the lobster fishing season in the area.

The district extends along a large part of the N.B. and N.S. coastlines. As the hard-working minister said, there are many difficulties in the way of reaching a solution. I know, though, the minister, and other people in his department, are interested in their ideas of practical fishermen.

### Your Ideas Are Being Sought

IT'S BEEN suggested the season could be shortened by cutting a couple of weeks off at the first of May. There may be other suggestions.

Parts of New Brunswick and of Cape Breton have been hit hard at times by ice, I'm told, so the problem extends beyond our shores. It seems silly to say merely that nothing can be done, when the situation is so serious - and it is serious to those people who suffer heavy trap and gear losses - unless a real effort is made to find a solution. I know our department people here are interested in your ideas.

### Gallup Polls Are Discussed

GALLUP POLL released this week indicate that 45 percent of Canada's voters favor the Liberals at present, with only 38 percent supporting the PCs. The figures for the March election in 1958 were 54 for the PCs with only 34 for the Grits.

The figures are impressive, and Liberals are making the best possible use of them as they campaign across the nation, even though their elation must be sobered by the information that 21 percent are listed as "undecided", and they could well swing the election.

But even at that the Liberals are happy, although they should realize that their joy must be tempered by memories of the past.

I RECALL when I was running in the 1957 election that Campaign Manager Ben Rogers shouted to me from his car on Saturday, June 8, two days before the election, that he had "good news" for me.

A telegram he handed me said latest Gallup Poll figures assured the Liberals of at least 166 seats. It was good news, for that was only four less than the 170 they took in 1953.

### Voters' Poll Was Different

BUT THE joy was short lived. Canadians conducted their own poll on Monday, June 10, and the Liberals just had 105 seats when they completed their voting. The PCs had 112. It paved the way for the 1958 sweep in 1958 when the Tories took an unprecedented 208 seats on March 31.

The Liberals ended up with 48, three less than the PCs had managed less than five years earlier, although it was still seven more than the PCs had won in the General Election of 1949.

Mr. Rogers and I laughed over it this week, as we met and chatted for a few minutes in front of the library on Grafton Street.

### Sometimes We Wonder

AND THAT reminds me that the Library people are wondering when they are going to be moved out of the building which must be destroyed to make way for the new Fathers of Confederation Memorial building that is to come. I remember when it was built back in the early Thirties, and it does seem destructive to tear it down, along with the Cabot Building (old Post Office) which was renovated only two or three years ago, for Provincial Government offices.

AS A chap who grew to manhood out in Rose Valley, in the days when dollars, and pennies also, had to be watched most carefully, I wonder at times just where we are going in this thing we sometimes call "progress". I'm sure many of you must have similar thoughts.

### Liberal Leader Will Remain

ALEX MATHESON is going to stay as Provincial Liberal Leader, I found when I talked to him at his home yesterday. I thought my old friend would give over the leadership and accept the quieter, much easier job of running his law office and earning the living which normally comes fairly easily to a lawyer who is as well known as he is.

But that's not for the man who is just recovering from a bout of illness that took him away from the Provincial Legislature late in March and is still keeping him away from work, though he "feels fine" and is only waiting for the day when his doctor will give him the green light on getting back into harness.

Politics is in his blood and it would be a dreary life without it, I suspect. I recall that he was deeply interested in politics when I first met him back in Prince of Wales College days, and that was at an age when few young men had any interest in that sort of thing. The man would probably be lost if he broke the connecting link with active politics which he forged more than 20 years ago at a byelection in Second Queens, after some years as an active worker in his party's district and country organizations.