

Oral Questions

This is in keeping with the procedures of the Canadian judicial system, procedures that have been followed in similar circumstances with other vessels of similar size, shape and value.

We are very pleased to see that a bond has been posted. As a result the vessel and crew are free to leave at any time.

In addition to the bond being posted, some 130 tonnes of product have been removed from the vessel and is being held by the crown as evidence. It will be held in a storage facility and will be disposed of by the court at the end of the judicial proceedings.

There has been no negotiation, nor should there be in terms of the judicial proceedings themselves. I know the hon. Leader of the Opposition would agree with this. The proceedings have been conducted as they ought to be by the court in the normal manner.

Now that both a bond has been posted and there is no fishing on the nose and tail of the Grand Banks, this may well be an opportunity for talks. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister have given instructions to a negotiating team in Brussels. We shall see.

[Translation]

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister whether in connection with the release of the trawler *Estai*, Canada tried to obtain, or possibly obtained, guarantees from the European Union or Spain that their trawlers will not fish for turbot throughout the forthcoming negotiations with Canada?

[English]

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a good question. Canada has made it clear since the beginning of this difficulty between Canada and the EU that we will not negotiate while fish are being caught.

I was pleased to note yesterday we had four or five days in a row of no fishing on the nose and tail of the Grand Banks. For a few hours last night one vessel did cross over into the area of the nose but I can report that this morning it had pulled back again.

For the moment, as we speak here in this Chamber, there are no vessels on the nose and tail. Bond has been posted on this particular fishing vessel. It will sail out of harbour. I should point out it will sail out without a net, without the ability to fish. The net was cut.

• (1420)

I can also report, and I know the Leader of the Opposition will be happy to hear this, that Canadian technology in global positioning systems—I am advertising now to the planet—were successful in allowing us to find and to retrieve today the net from the *Estai*.

The net that has been retrieved bears manufacturer markings identical to that on part of the equipment still left on the *Estai*. The fish that were pulled out of the water—we videotaped this—were still kicking. They were alive. This is the net recently cut. The net had a 115 millimetre mesh, which is smaller than the 130 millimetre required by NAFO. In addition, the net in question had an 80 millimetre liner in the net.

Some hon. members: Shame, shame.

[Translation]

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether formal negotiations are now taking place between Canadian diplomats and their European counterparts, but I hope so. However, I would like to ask the minister whether Canada has initiated certain discussions so that formal negotiations can begin as soon as possible between its representatives and those representing Spain and the European Union?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the team headed by the Canadian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs is now in Brussels to start negotiations with representatives of the European Union. We are ready and willing, and we want to settle this in a diplomatic way.

There are two things we want to accomplish. First, ensure that the conservation measures we support will be respected, and we therefore hope to reach an agreement with our friends in the European Union on setting up an effective mechanism for surveillance and monitoring. I also want to take this opportunity to say that in a spirit of co-operation, we are prepared to review with European Union representatives the quota share we obtained as a result of the last negotiations.

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CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. In a report made public yesterday, the inspector general of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, better known as CSIS, notes serious irregularities in the use of informants on university campuses and in political parties during elections.

How does the Solicitor General explain his statements that CSIS did not spy on or infiltrate political parties, when the inspector general of CSIS criticizes his failure to issue any sort of guideline on dealing with these political party informants during electoral campaigns?

[English]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the report is for a period of more than two years before this government took office. Since that time work has been