

Adjournment Debate

to the outcome of the board's public hearings which are conducted in Calgary.

At this time I believe it is preferable to continue constructive dialogue with the CPUC as a means of resolving this dispute. The value of such a non-confrontational process should not be discounted. Nevertheless, should these talks not prove fruitful, we would still have at our disposal the ability to seek recourse under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

I might add that I am cautiously optimistic that these talks will lead to a successful conclusion that will be mutually beneficial to the energy trading relationship and for it to continue in the future.

FISHERIES

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, I asked a question on the lobster fishery back on December 4, 1991 and my supplementary question was on quota. I want to deal with both of them.

At the time, I was asking the Minister of State for Transport, because of the opening of the season, and because of the crisis as far as price went in the lobster fishery, whether she would ensure that there would be cargo space available for York, which is a very lucrative market for the lobster fishermen from Nova Scotia and, for that matter, for other areas that ship their cargo of lobster to Europe.

At the time she said yes. It is now four months later and I have never heard back from the minister. Maybe tonight I will hear from the parliamentary secretary what will be done in the future in order to ensure, particularly when the season starts, that there is access to cargo.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the price back then was probably around \$2.50; today it is a hefty \$7.95 or \$8-and-something. On the weekend it was said it might even go up as far as \$10. If it is priced that way, the market is probably hard to fill at that price, but at the same time the number of lobsters has gone down.

The other question I raised at the time had to do with quotas, whether or not the groundfish would see an increase in quota for 1992.

At the time, that question was addressed to the parliamentary secretary. He is here in the House today and he answered: "I can tell the hon. member opposite yes, we will look into that immediately".

As a result, there were no increases for the sectors in groundfish. The only thing that has increased that I can see, and I think it is of grave concern, is the number of licences that have been issued for gill nets. I heard on the weekend that there are now 900 gill net licences in Scotia-Fundy, in one area. It is an incredible amount.

There will be a meeting on April 14 to see if these gill-netters can go to George's to set their gill nets on quota. A few years ago there was an over-capacity in one sector for groundfish and all of a sudden there are 900 licences that appear for gill-netting fish on the east coast. It is a real crisis.

If there are no fish and the boats are not able to fish, why the abundance of licences? Why are they going to George's Bank? When the UN has banned gill-nets, why is this government now opening up a gill-net fishery that never existed in the past in the ground fishery?

When you cannot find more quota there should not be this enlargement of activity that is going on out there. I wonder what the longliners think about all the gill-netters who will be fishing where they are. I think of the numbers that have been reduced in the dragger sector with all the gill-nets that are going to be there. I think of the poor stocks on George's Bank and in the Bay of Fundy that will be hurt because of loose gill-nets floating around the bottom and capturing the sea life there. Gill-nets are very harsh.

Perhaps the parliamentary secretary might want to bring that matter up. Since then, there has been no issue of additional quotas in the groundfish sector. But all of a sudden, there is an addition. When the quotas were announced in January, there were no additional quotas given, but there were these numbers of licences given.

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite is covering a wide range of subjects.