

Adjournment Debate

After that investment, the program was shelved for an almost entirely new one for 1981. Fourth, are there plans for expanding that kind of policy to other species such as salmon? That is the only question the minister attempted to answer. All he could say was he did not know of any plans, he would have to check.

I received no answers. My concern is that the minister does not know what is going on in the west coast fishing industry, nor does he understand the problems those fishermen are facing.

This raises new concerns. The fishermen are being continuously faced with what appear to be impetuous, in-house decisions made by people who seldom go into the field. They are made on the eleventh or fourteenth floor, if there is one, of an office building on Pender Street in Vancouver. It is a policy untouched by human hands; sterile, as clinically pure as possible. Those policymakers do not ask how their decisions affect the fishermen who have made their investment and their plans.

The minister should have known that eight out of the 11 groups were opposed to the lottery system. Only three wanted it. Although roughly 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the fishermen were opposed to it, he was set to go ahead. I understand that since I asked the question, there has been a modification of the program. Part of the lottery system has been cast aside and most or maybe all of the fishermen will be allowed to go out.

I want to quote from page 2 of a news release issued by the department entitled "1981 Herring Roe Season". I quote:

—it has been necessary to set a maximum number of vessels of each gear type for each of the three areas. Consequently, all fishermen may not receive an area licence certificate for that most preferred area.

I showed this to the minister after I had asked the question. He did not understand what it was all about. I must say I am worried. In his answer to me the minister said, as reported at page 7016 of *Hansard*:

● (2225)

—but in 1981, according to the reports of the biologists, we had to question very seriously if the type of management breakdown which had occurred in 1979 was tolerable—

In talking to fishermen I find it was not the biologists, but the herring co-ordinator who was out there. The minister is simply not doing his job for Pacific coast fisheries; he is not going out there and he is not consulting the industry thoroughly. He seems to have a few officials he consorts with and he bases his final decision on the basis of that short and shallow consultation. It is time he went out there and listened to the fishermen.

Mr. George Henderson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, an area licensing system is being implemented for the 1981 roe herring season. All herring roe fishermen are eligible for the program, with no special entry status for any particular group of fishermen.

Three areas of the coast were identified as separate fishing areas and I will mention them: north of Cape Caution, the Gulf of Georgia and the west coast Vancouver Island. Each roe herring licence holder is eligible to fish in only one of these three areas. A choice form was sent to roe herring licence holders on which they were asked to rank the three areas according to their order of choice. Licence holders were advised that, in order to achieve relatively equal opportunity for catches in each area, a draw might be necessary in order to award licence certificates in some areas.

According to choice forms submitted as of yesterday February 11, 1981, 1,416 indicate that although an optimal management situation may not be possible in all areas, the fleet is adequately distributed by first choice to allow a fishery to proceed in an orderly manner and to provide equitable catch opportunity. All roe herring licence holders are being assigned to their area of first choice for the 1981 season. This will accommodate voluntary pooling and fishing in traditional areas for native and other fishermen.

A number of management options were discussed for the 1981 roe herring season. The options discussed with industry were: no roe fishery; vessel pooling for seiners; individual vessel quotas; and no change from current management practices. The consensus among the industry organizations canvassed was that a new management plan was essential. The establishment of zones will improve gear distribution on the grounds and is expected to lead to larger catches being available in each area without endangering the stocks through high risk fishing situations.

● (2230)

It is quite an undertaking to manage the west coast fishery, and I think the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. LeBlanc) and the department are doing their best in a very, very severe situation.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m.

At 10.30 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.