

S. O. 21

HISTORIC EVENTS

POLAND—ANNIVERSARY OF 1791 CONSTITUTION

Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, today Poles throughout the world are observing the anniversary of one of Poland's most important days, the signing and ratification of the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791. For workers in present-day Poland, May 3 is a day of struggle for the fundamental rights embodied in the Constitution of 1791, freedom of expression and association.

The current strikes and demonstrations serve as a reminder that the Polish nation will not endure the present government suppression or the atrocious economic conditions. Meaningful and serious dialogue must be initiated between the Church, Solidarity, and Government in order to alleviate the deteriorating state of affairs.

I call upon the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) and the Government of Canada to press Polish government officials to relegalize the independent trade union Solidarnosc and to respect the inalienable rights of all Poles contained in the Constitution of 1791.

* * *

[Translation]

FORESTS

NATIONAL FOREST WEEK

Mr. Gabriel Desjardins (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, this week, May 1 to 7, we are celebrating National Forestry Week throughout the country on the theme "Forests—Wealth for All."

Need I remind you of the vital role the forest industry plays in Canada and Quebec? Forestry provides jobs for more than 750,000 Canadians and brings in over \$37 billion to our economy.

Quebec alone accounts for 14 per cent of world pulp and paper production and 35 per cent of Canadian production. More than 85 per cent of Quebec forest products are exported outside the province and 65 per cent are exported outside the country.

In 1985, forest products accounted for 22 per cent of Quebec exports. In that year, the federal Government invested \$150 million in a \$300-million subsidiary agreement for forestry development with Quebec.

In my riding of Témiscamingue only, more than \$5 million has been allocated under this agreement and 5,000 weeks of work have been provided.

In conclusion, let me pay tribute to all business people and workers in the forest industry, who with their knowledge and ability play a large part in the Canadian economy.

[English]

FISHERIES

NOVA SCOTIA—WITHDRAWAL OF LOBSTER FISHING LICENCES

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Siddon) has finally taken action to reverse his decision to grant four offshore lobster licences in Nova Scotia. Previously he ignored advice, and as a result caused the resignation of all but one member of the Southwest Nova Lobster Advisory Board by granting the licences. He has brought into disrepute the whole process of granting fishing licences in Canada.

It required enormous pressure to get him to change his position. The Maritimes Fishermen's Union, the Eastern Fishermen's Federation, inshore fishermen throughout Nova Scotia, provincial and federal New Democrats, the Nova Scotia Government, and eventually even Conservative Members of Parliament, have all publicly opposed his decision. By his action he has confirmed that his original decision was wrong.

The granting of licences in the fishery confers enormous economic advantage or opportunity. The process should be public, open, subject to agreed upon guidelines and, above all, fair. The Minister failed this test.

* * *

INDIAN AFFAIRS

CHILD WELFARE AND FAMILY SERVICES

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, on April 6 the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. McKnight) announced his intention to seek cabinet approval of a framework for negotiations on Indian child welfare and family services. He wants cabinet approval by the summer. He is allowing less than one month for consultation with Indian people on this very important issue.

On April 21, here in Ottawa, at a conference organized by the Assembly of First Nations of Indian child welfare directors, participants denounced the Minister's plans. In a statement delivered at the conference by elder Angus Swan from Manitoba, the reasons for the rejection were outlined: the process and principles have been unilaterally developed by the Department; the time frame is unrealistic; existing mechanisms for negotiation are being ignored; and the right of Indian First Nations to make decisions about the lives of their children is not being respected.

The process is an insult to the recognized right of Indian self-government in Canada.