

Adjournment Debate

It is Canada's long-standing position that the waters of Dixon Entrance are internal waters of Canada. The United States disputes this, claiming a portion of these waters is subject to their jurisdiction.

This summer four Canadian fishing vessels were arrested by the U.S. Coast Guard in the Dixon Entrance south of the so-called A-B line, which Canada maintains is the international maritime and land boundary. The United States has alleged that these vessels were fishing in undisputed U.S. waters, north of the A-B line.

We made strong diplomatic representations to the United States in each one of these cases, protesting actions which we regard as contrary to international law and unacceptable to Canada. As a result of these protests, all of the vessels were promptly released and in the case of one of the vessels, the *Eliza Joye*, no charges were laid. Fines were levied by the United States in the other three cases.

We have impressed upon the United States the need to avoid these types of incidents in the future. If U.S. authorities have evidence that Canadian vessels are fishing north of the A-B line, we believe that a warning should be issued.

We have a long history of working to manage our fisheries relations with the United States along all of our borders, including Dixon Entrance. Our approach has been to protest these breaches of Canadian sovereignty and to ensure the safest possible conditions for our fisherman. There is no doubt that the United States has received this message loud and clear.

The hon. member also raised the question of U.S. submarine traffic, but my time has run out. In closing, once again I assure my hon. colleague that Canada continues as always to maintain that Dixon Entrance is part of its internal waters.

[English]

PORT OF HALIFAX

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, when will the government realize that if it wishes to speak the language of competitiveness it must learn the language of transportation, and that if it talks of transportation then it must talk about the port of Halifax?

Many times this fall I have asked this government to take some action to help save the major source of the

Atlantic economy which is the port of Halifax. The government has answered with apathy, rising repeatedly to pass off the problem as one of overcapacity or to tell me that it would get back to me.

I am here to tell this government that Atlantic Canadians have had seven years of "we will get back to you" from this government, and we have had enough.

How many studies will land on the desk of the minister before he figures out that it is his policies and those of his colleagues that have put our port at a serious disadvantage in relation to its competitors?

The latest study which a damning indictment of the government's apathy initiative is from Ports Canada, and I quote from its key conclusion:

To restore the Canadian railway industry's competitiveness *vis-à-vis* the U.S., government should adjust their fiscal and regulatory policies, including reduced fuel and property taxes, increased rates of capital cost allowance and allow for more abandonment of uneconomic rail infrastructure.

I want this government to announce immediately that it is moving to amend the National Transportation Act in order to conform to the recommendations of its own study.

Lower the tax burden that puts our American competitors at a nearly five to one advantage. Call in the head of CN Rail and ask why that Crown corporation is not doing more for the taxpayers of the region to bring the lines back.

Why does it not actively promote Halifax in foreign ports? Why is there no action for an entire decade of the 1980s when it was clear that Americans were going deeply into double stack service?

Further, I want the government to initiate an immediate consultation process that will bring decision makers from the municipal, provincial and federal fields together with industry leaders to formulate a recovery strategy. Too much time has already been wasted. If we work together we can ensure that what we will have to do is not done too little too late.

Why does the government have to apply its wrong-headed cost recovery strategy to shipping when it is so clear that neither other sectors of the industry nor our competitors will be doing the same thing? Cost recovery is a laudable theory, as long as everyone is playing by the same rules on the same level playing field. Let us finally get our act together.