

Volume 6, No. 25

June 21, 1978



Ottawa, Canada

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Canada bans U.S. commercial fishing — balance of interests sought

In a statement to the House of Commons on June 2, Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson announced that Canada had ordered all U.S. fishing vessels to leave Canadian waters by noon, June 4, following difficulties encountered in negotiations of the Canada/U.S. interim fisheries agreement.

While this action had been taken with "great reluctance", said Mr. Jamieson, Canada believed it was the best way of "maintaining a balance between the fishing interests of the two countries".

Under the circumstances, the United States Government took similar action for Canadian fishing boats in U.S. waters, announcing that it "regrets the decision of the Government of Canada" and that "it has no option but to close its waters to fishermen from Canada during any periods when Canadian waters are not available to U.S. fishermen".

Negotiations between the two countries were scheduled to resume on June 18.

The text of Mr. Jamieson's statement to the House of Commons follows:

In the past few weeks, the Government has encountered several difficulties with respect to the implementation of the 1978 Canada/U.S.A. interim fisheries agreement on both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

Problem areas

On the Pacific coast, the problem relates to the terms under which Canadian fishermen would be allowed access to waters off Washington State to troll for salmon.

On the Atlantic coast, the problems relate to unrestricted U.S. scallop and pollock fisheries in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank area and what we view as excessive allowable U.S. catch levels for cod and haddock.

These difficulties were discussed at a meeting between Canada and U.S. officials in Washington on April 28 and at meetings between the Canadian and U.S.A. special negotiators for maritime boundaries in Ottawa on May 11-12 and again in Washington on May 26.

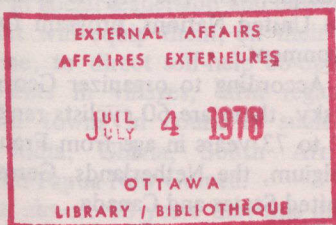
At the May 26 meeting and during subsequent conversations, it has become clear that these problems cannot be resolved in a way that would protect Canadian interests. My colleagues and I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the

1978 Interim Reciprocal Fishery Agreement cannot be implemented by the U.S. in a manner compatible with preserving and protecting our fisheries interests. Accordingly, I wish to announce that the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs has called in the U.S. Ambassador and given him a diplomatic note stating that the Government of Canada is not prepared at this time to continue provisional implementation of the agreement. The note states that, consequently, U.S. fishing vessels will not be permitted to continue fishing operations in Canadian

U.S. sports fishermen welcome

While Canada has closed its fishing waters to U.S. commercial fishermen, Roméo LeBlanc, Fisheries Minister, announced on June 6 that the ban did not apply to sports fishermen, who were still welcome to fish in Canadian waters.

A survey of angling, released on May 20, showed that of some 6.4 million persons who went sport fishing in Canada in 1975, over one million were primarily visitors from the United States.



On this day....
in 1749, Halifax, Nova Scotia, was founded following the immigration of over 2,500 British immigrants brought in by Governor Cornwallis.

June 21/78