

Private Members' Business

The agreement also contains provisions with respect to roe herring. While Canada continues to control the export of roe herring to all destinations, exports are permitted to the United States if processed to the same extent as herring is processed in Canada, or if actual consumption is certified to take place there. This helps to ensure that Canadians will continue to be able to benefit from the comparative advantage they enjoy through the expertise they have developed in herring roe extraction.

It should also be noted that under the agreement for roe herring and salmon caught in Canada's Pacific waters to be transported directly from the fishing grounds to the United States, the following conditions, among others, have to be met: first, only licensed Canadian tender vessels, equipped as sea-based landing stations, are eligible to transport roe herring and salmon directly from the fishing grounds to the United States.

Second, in order to qualify as a sea-based landing station, a tender vessel is required to maintain on board adequate facilities for Department of Fisheries and Oceans inspectors to supervise counting, sorting, and weighing and to permit on-board biological sampling. All fish brought on board the buying station must be made available for these purposes.

Third, a sufficient number of Canadian inspectors have to be on board each buying station at all times that the station is in operation.

Through this agreement the government has maintained an effective resource management and conservation system for Pacific salmon and herring. The same high standards in inspection and sampling activities are used now in both onshore and offshore locales. Hon. members should note that our fisheries managers are fully satisfied with the quality of our conservation and management information. Further, rather than the mass export of Canadian unprocessed fish that some had predicted—we heard the cries; we heard them over and over again in this House—less than 1 per cent of the catch has been exported to the United States through at-sea landing stations.

I will repeat that for my hon. friends across the way: rather than the mass export of Canadian unprocessed fish that some had predicted, less than 1 per cent of the catch has been exported to the United States through at-sea landing stations.

The free trade agreement panel process, which was not of a binding nature, enabled both sides to come to a judgment as to how the principles of the findings could be maintained, while allowing for a practical implementation which would satisfy the legitimate concerns of each side. As such, it provided Canada and the United States with a basis for coming to a resolution of this bilateral dispute.

Some of our critics on the salmon and herring issue sometimes sound as if they just cannot stand any kind of trade liberalization and do not want any trade agreements with anybody, but we cannot be content to stick our heads in the sand and wish our challenges away. The government has developed a resolution to this dispute which will continue to benefit the Canadian economy. All those concerned in these fisheries must be ready to sharpen their pencils. They must be prepared to make the kinds of adjustments that our competitors are making world-wide. If they are not, they will not stay on top; if they are, we will stay on top in this area. This government has confidence in the ability of the British Columbia salmon and herring fisheries to meet this challenge.

• (1720)

The motion before us is a vote of non-confidence. It is a vote of non-confidence in the ability of our fisheries to compete. That is why this motion is fundamentally flawed and why it cannot be supported by members on our side of the House.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my NDP colleague for introducing this motion and for bringing this subject back to the floor of the House. As he has outlined in his remarks, it is really an issue not only of trade but an issue of resource conservation and the ability of Canada to control one of its most vital resources, namely fish, be it on the Pacific coast or be it on the Atlantic coast.

I listened with interest to the explanation of my friend from the NDP of his motion. I also listened with interest to the comments from the other side. It is very interesting to hear the government engage in this form of self-justification after the fact.

As was outlined earlier, the lobster and herring GATT ruling on the west coast emerged as a result of a complaint by the United States through the GATT process. Canada, in response to that initial GATT ruling, instituted landing requirements. This government