

Supply

We have accepted that vessels of 100 feet or more based outside the Gulf of St. Lawrence have quotas in 4RS, 3PN and 4V in 1979. However, this should be the last year.

With due respect we remind you that we want that the fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence be reserved exclusively for vessels based in the gulf.

Rodrigue Tremblay

Mr. Chairman, this morning the representative of the province of Quebec also told me that the owners of big trawlers, National Products and Nickerson, regularly come back before the committee. At every meeting they appear before the committee and ask to be allowed to enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence but they are turned down. There was never any comprehensive study or debate in the advisory committee, Mr. Chairman, about the access of trawlers to the gulf.

The hon. minister knows that Quebec is not the only province involved in this battle. Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick are in it too, as my colleague from Gloucester has underlined last night. In the end Quebec has always accepted a compromise in the debates between federal and provincial governments. But opening Gulf of St. Lawrence area 4T to trawlers cannot be an acceptable compromise for the province of Quebec because there have been no consultations. Compromise implies consultation. Without consultation, no compromise. Therefore the Quebec government, with which I am not always in agreement, is strongly opposed to the minister's action. Moreover, one of the representatives on that committee, the general manager of the Pêcheurs unis du Québec in a statement that cannot be read today for lack of time—he will be appearing soon before the committee anyway—himself indicates there has been no debate on the committee other than producers, boat owners—which means large companies—suggesting they would like to fish in the gulf. He states he heard of it only upon issuance of the minister's release, whereby big trawlers were allowed access to the gulf. Mr. Chairman, this is not a world where there are only government and big business. Labour unions also exist. I have here a telegram sent by Mr. Odilon Gionest, president of the Newport plant local of the national union, in which it is stated, and I quote:

We wish to inform you of our objection to the entry into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, starting from November 1, 1979, of trawlers 100 feet long and over, to catch 6,000 metric tons of cod.

We feel the fish so caught will automatically reduce next spring the fishing potential of trawlers under 100 feet.

He goes on requesting that representations be made. I have hundreds of other telegrams, Mr. Chairman, that I could read into the record.

I have only a few minutes left to ask the minister to reconsider his policy, to act like a good Canadian and remember the humble fisherman, as he used to do indeed. In a speech on northern cod delivered on August 30, 1979, in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, he said the following:

Our policy, my policy, on the matter is quite simple and specific. The coastal fishermen have priority of access to that resource. For them, for workers in processing plants, for their families, for communities where they live, the right

[Mr. Cyr.]

and opportunity to have access to that resource is essential, because they have special ties with those stocks and the government of Canada recognizes this.

Mr. Chairman, if the Government of Canada recognizes the fishermen's priority of access to the resources in the gulf, I would like him to say so today and withdraw those policies that he put forward and by doing so, it would be in accordance with the meeting held in October.

● (1420)

[English]

That will conform to the report of the Atlantic Groundfish Advisory Sub-Committee which, on page 6, recommends:

Trawlers over 100 feet be phased out of the Gulf groundfish fisheries between 1980-1986 to coincide with phase-out of the French treaty.

[Translation]

And it goes on to say that entry should be denied to certain vessels carrying equipment that can destroy the ocean floor. Mr. Chairman, in light of the position taken by the minister I would not want to leave unsaid the disappointment felt by Quebec fishermen, producers and all those concerned by the fishing industry. I would ask him to read all the telexes sent on July 5, 11, 17, 23 and 24 by Quebec United Fishermen asking him for this 10,000-ton stock increase; never was there any question of allowing trawlers over 100 feet to take this fish which is reserved for inshore fishermen. I put my trust in the hon. minister's good will to put an end to this dispute.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I regret to advise the hon. member that his time has expired.

[English]

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is here this afternoon, I should like to quickly ask him four very important questions concerning fishermen on the west coast. Since I may not use all my time in asking these questions, I want to ask about another cultural matter and perhaps we can deal with these together.

I was very interested in some of the debate last night, especially the contributions by the hon. member for Westmorland-Kent, the former minister of fisheries. The present minister was on the fisheries committee at the time the Davis salmon licences A and B licensing scheme was introduced. I believe, although I cannot recall for certain, that he opposed that. I know I did, because I felt we should be licensing people rather than boats.

The industry is in chaos at the moment on the west coast—especially the salmon industry—because of overcapitalization and certain other problems.

My first question to the minister is to inquire whether he has any plans to discourage this overcapitalization or to change in any other way the licensing procedures which, I take it, he opposed when they were introduced. If he has, I would certainly like to hear about them.