

2.5 Deputy S. Power of the Minister for Economic Development regarding Jersey fishermen landing their catches directly at St. Malo:

Will the Minister explain what action, if any, he intends to take in negotiating the removal of the ongoing ban on Jersey fishermen landing their catches directly at St. Malo when they are allowed to do so freely at St. Brieuc and Roscoff?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Economic Development):

I would like to ask my Assistant Minister, the Constable of St. Clement, to answer this question. He has delegated responsibility for agriculture and all other fishy matters. I have spoken to the Deputy following last week's incident and the Deputy has agreed.

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (Assistant Minister for Economic Development - rapporteur):

I am pleased to advise the Deputy that there is no ban on Jersey fishermen landing their catches at St. Malo. There were some difficulties experienced in early 2008 but diligent work by the Economic Development Department negotiating with many parties, including the St. Malo Customs Service, resulted in a convention being drawn up as a result of which for the first customs clearance only one copy needs to be signed by the French merchant receiving the catch and the St. Malo Customs. Thereafter, no further administrative action is required. This arrangement will be in place imminently.

2.5.1 Deputy S. Power:

That sounds very plausible but it is simply not what is happening. Can I ask the Assistant Minister that under E.U. Accession Treaty Rules Protocol 3, Jersey is entitled to free access to the E.U. markets for all agricultural and fishing products. This is not happening in St. Malo. Can the Assistant Minister explain why for over a year convention agreements are required in St. Malo when they are not required in Granville, Cherbourg, St. Brieuc or Roscoff?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

The Deputy is absolutely right. I agree. My interpretation is that under Protocol 3 of the Accession Treaty, Jersey is treated as if it were a member of E.U. for trade purposes. What we are dealing with here is an administrative procedural matter with the St. Malo Customs and probably worst of all their new computer system which is causing the difficulties. These difficulties as I say have now been resolved. The convention is in place and normal service should be resumed effectively almost immediately.

2.5.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Is the Assistant Minister aware that Jersey importers from France do find that particular port totally standing outside the system in terms of how matters are handled? If so, what steps is he taking to ensure that there is smooth and speedy importation of goods through that?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Obviously I am aware that there have been some difficulties, as I have just explained, over the last 12 months. Negotiations have been going on between the Economic Development Department, our office in Caen, many other agencies and, as I have just

explained in my answer under supplementary, those difficulties should now be resolved and problems should no longer exist.

2.5.3 Deputy S. Power:

Would the Assistant Minister not agree with me that the Chambre de Commerce in St. Malo are in effect creating an embargo on Jersey fishing products in St. Malo, that this is absolutely discriminatory and it must stop immediately?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I have no evidence whatsoever of an embargo and indeed the St. Malo Chamber of Commerce is one of the parties involved in the negotiations of getting this difficulty resolved. Yes, it should be resolved immediately. As I say, the hard work of officers of the Economic Development Department and the Jersey Office in Caen those difficulties have been resolved.