

Stan Rogers, Tiny Fish for Japan

(This song is not intended as a slur of any kind on the countries who import food products that our government won't let us eat. It is Stan's sadly ironic way of describing exactly the status of the Inland Fisheries as seen through the eyes of many a fisherman out of a job. There IS a Norfolk Hotel - Stan played there years ago. The village was dying then. Now they have one of the best Summer Theatre houses in Ontario, but that's little consolation to the men with the boats.)

Where Patterson Creek's muddy waters run down
Past the penny arcades, by the harbour downtown,
All the old Turtlebacks rust in the rain
Like they never will leave there again.
But leave there they will in the hours before dawn,
Slip out in the darkness without word or song;
For a few more years yet they will work while they can
To catch tiny fish for Japan.
No white fish or trout here, we leave them alone.
The inspectors raise hell if we take any home.
What kind of fisherman can't eat his catch
Or call what he's taken his own?
But the plant works three shifts now. There's plenty of pay.
We ship seventeen tons of this garbage each day.
If we want to eat fish, then we'll open a can,
And catch tiny fish for Japan.
In the Norfolk Hotel over far too much beer,
The old guys remember when the water ran clear.
No poisons with names that we can't understand
And no tiny fish for Japan...
So the days run together. Each one is the same.
And it's good that the smelt have no lovelier name.
It's all just a job now, we'll work while we can,
To catch tiny fish for Japan.
And we'll catch tiny fish for Japan.