

The three initiatives were: first, a diplomatic initiative to engage the European Commission and EC member states in a dialogue on the issue; second, a public information initiative to bring the message to European publics about the serious economic and ecological consequences of overfishing; and, third, an international law initiative toward giving proper effect to the provisions of the Law of the Sea Convention relating to fisheries outside 200 miles. In bringing forward these initiatives, the government recognized that there is no easy way to end foreign overfishing outside 200 miles and no solution that Canada can simply impose on the international community.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and I have pressed Canada's case with members of the European Commission and with Ministers from EC member states. So has the Prime Minister, by raising the overfishing issue with world leaders ... for example, EC President Jacques Delors, President Gonzalez of Spain, President Mitterrand of France, Chancellor Kohl of Germany and Prime Minister Thatcher of Britain. This has underlined the national priority that this government accords to the overfishing issue.

As well last fall, non-governmental groups delivered a strong message in Europe against overfishing outside 200 miles. These groups included an industry delegation and an all party parliamentary delegation, with representatives from the House of Commons and the Newfoundland and Nova Scotia legislatures. Canada's embassies provided advice and assistance for these spokespersons, as well as distributing materials on the issues to legislators, environmentalists, scientists, journalists and others.

All of this was carried forward in close consultation and with the support of an advisory group comprising of fishermen, and industry and provincial government representatives. That process of consultation is on-going, as several of you here, like Ron Bulmer, are aware of from your participation.

In December 1989, the EC Council of Fisheries Ministers met in Brussels to consider proposals from the European Commission for the EC's overall fishery for 1990, including in the NAFO Regulatory Area. For 1990 the EC continued its policy of setting unilateral quotas above NAFO decisions, but significantly reduced those quotas from previous years. EC unilateral quotas for 1990 totalled 59,400 t (down from 160,000 t a year before), including 32,000t. of northern cod (down from 84,000 t a year before).