

*Supply—Fisheries*

nations. It was for this reason I stated that it is regrettable unilateral action is to be taken on the 12-mile fishing zone.

The minister, in his statement, said that the 12-mile limit was imposed as a conservation measure for sustained yield in the fisheries of our country. However, our fish do not spawn within 12 miles of our shores. Our main breeding grounds are Georges and Browns banks, Sable island bank, Banqueray, St. Pierre bank, Bradelle bank and Grand bank, to name a few. None of these areas come within the 12-mile limit; yet it is here that conservation measures should be carried out. This, I submit, can only be done by international agreement. At the present time, the fishing fleets of 13 nations, including Canada, all members of the international commission for the northwest Atlantic fisheries, are operating on our east coast banks. The greatest increase in the number of fishing trawlers in recent years has been in the Russian fleet and it is estimated that over 150 large Russian trawlers operate on a year round basis on Georges bank and the Grand bank off Newfoundland. These large trawlers often snag nets of Canadian ships or ram smaller boats in the fog. However, the chief cause for concern is the fact that the Russians, as members of the international commission for the northwest Atlantic fisheries, signed and approved an agreement on a minimum mesh size but apparently have disregarded this agreement.

For example, I read from an article in the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* which is headed, "Reds Using Illegal Fish Nets". It reads in part as follows:

The president of the Atlantic fishermen's union reported Wednesday what he described as the first solid evidence that Russian fishermen off New England are using nets ruled illegal under the international convention for the northwest Atlantic fisheries.

The president, Capt. James Ackert, said he is filing protests with the convention in Halifax and with the U.S. state department.

He displayed what he said was fishing gear made in the Soviet union, brought to the Boston fish pier by the American trawler *Massachusetts* which found it in the Georges bank fishing grounds, off Newfoundland. He said it consists of netting of less than half an inch mesh used as an interliner in an approximate four inch mesh net.

"Even a sardine couldn't get through this mesh," Capt. Ackert said.

International conventions limiting the mesh size of nets under certain conditions are designed to conserve the supply of fish.

Later, on Friday, August 23, the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* carried this article:

A spokesman for the international commission for the northwest Atlantic fisheries said yesterday a Russian made net with one half inch mesh found by United States trawler on Georges bank, southwest of Nova Scotia, may have been legally used for catching herring.

[Mr. Crouse.]

The ICNAF spokesman here said Georges bank is in a division of the northwest Atlantic designated sub area 5 where the minimum net mesh size for cod and haddock is 4½ inches. He said there was no minimum size limit on nets used to catch herring.

"The Russians fish for herring on Georges bank", he said, and added that it was possible the net taken to Boston had been used for this purpose.

Mr. Chairman, in a situation of this kind it is difficult to say whether the Russians were fishing for herring or ground fish. We do know the Russians have a different motive for fishing than Canadians. They fish for food, while Canadians fish for profit. The Russian ships are equipped with modern machinery and their fleets roam far from their homeland in search of a good catch. They lead the world in oceanographic studies and research. In view of the progress they have made they should be well aware of the need to practice conservation methods, even on the high seas. If the Russians on Georges bank were fishing for herring rather than ground fish such as haddock and cod, they must also realize that the small mesh net being used destroys the little herring. Herring are the natural food of many ground fish, and when they disappear all other species become scarce.

Conferences on these problems have been called, but for one reason or another they have broken down in a stalemate without many of our conservation problems being solved. There have been three international conferences on the law of the sea and international fishing limits since 1930, but each time there was disagreement on the territorial limits to be established. As a result, Mexico claims nine miles, Chili, Peru and Ecuador 200 miles, and Ireland and Canada 12 miles. This causes international feuding, because more and more the ocean is recognized as an important source of food for a world faced with the prospect of overpopulation. In my opinion multilateral agreement among the fishing nations of the world for deep sea fisheries conservation will help guarantee this continuing source of protein. I would urge the minister and the government to give some consideration to convening another international conference so that conservation may be further discussed by all interested nations.

I was pleased to hear the minister's announcement that a federal-provincial conference on fisheries will be called on January 20, 1964, and at this conference all aspects of problems pertaining to the fishing industry will be discussed. I believe that at this conference priority should be given to calling an international conference, and I suggest to the minister that this is something he should discuss with the provincial ministers with