

The Commission, at our urging, is in the process of examining the role it might play in future. We have given formal notice of Canada's intention to withdraw from the Convention, as has the U.S.A. I am hopeful, however, that ICNAF can make the necessary adjustment to Canada's exclusive jurisdiction, management and enforcement in the 200 mile zone, and that new arrangements will preserve the long tradition of international cooperation, particularly in the field of scientific research, which has grown up within the Commission. On this basis Canada could continue to play a full and active part in the work of the Commission. After the December meeting, we will be in a better position to assess what our attitude toward ICNAF should be for the coming year.

Our next priority was to negotiate bilateral agreements with those countries which together account for almost 90% of the foreign fishing operations off our coasts. The Government has now concluded an intensive round of bilateral negotiations, and fisheries agreements are now in place with Norway, U.S.S.R., Poland, Spain and Portugal. These agreements set out the terms and conditions that Canada will apply in permitting foreign fishermen, under Canadian management and control, to harvest certain stocks surplus to our needs.

In addition we have required the submission of fishing programs from all members of ICNAF who wish to fish off our coasts in 1977. This information is essential in order to ensure that these projected fishing operations are compatible with the quotas established by ICNAF with Canadian concurrence.

The problems on the Pacific coast are no less important and we are taking the steps which we consider necessary to ensure that Canadian jurisdiction in our new Pacific zone is effective. Our recent bilateral agreements with the U.S.S.R. and Poland cover the Pacific coast and we are engaging in consultations with other countries that have previously fished there.

The Government will also take early action to promulgate an extended fisheries zone in the Arctic. There is no foreign commercial fishing in waters off the Canadian Arctic coast nor are there depleted stocks requiring urgent conservation measures. However, the Government is fully alive to the need to safeguard the fishing interests of the Inuit and to provide for the future development of fisheries in the Arctic area. Consequently the Government has decided to bring into force a 200 mile fisheries zone in the Arctic by March 1, 1977.

I have outlined the steps we have taken to ensure a smooth transition to the 200 mile jurisdiction regime. The response has been encouraging. Nations fishing off our coasts have shown a willingness to adapt to the facts of the resource crisis and to the new legal regime which Canada is bringing in.