

foreign fleets will vacate our shores and head for other fishing grounds to do damage there, and our fishery will in fact have been destroyed.

I had hoped the minister would have taken advantage of the occasion to express his concern, even though my question was couched in terms of what the minister was going to do to compensate the loss to fishermen as a result of the 25 per cent decline in the total catch. The minister replied: I am happy to report that the total income of fishermen on the east coast is up appreciably. It is up 10 per cent over that of last year.

That was not the answer I wanted. That was a misleading answer. If I may say so, it was irresponsible. I wanted the minister to express his concern over the 25 per cent decline in the fishery and to say what he, as the minister responsible, was doing about this decline which is directly attributable to overfishing by foreign fleets off our shores.

We are now on the verge of oil discoveries being made off the east coast of Canada. We are not satisfied that the minister, in his environmental responsibilities, has satisfied himself as to the consequences on our marine resources of an oil strike on the continental shelf. I feel the minister should address himself to these questions. This is a very serious matter and I hope the minister will respond to these questions tonight. I hope he will tell us whether the pollution referred to by the United States authorities extends to our coast and, if so, what steps he is taking to do something about it.

I hope the minister will tell us what it is proposed to do at the next Law of the Sea Conference. We have not been able to establish the government's position. We have a right to know, in light of the evidence before us which indicates that at the rate we are going there will be no more fishery in ten years. Cod resources will have been destroyed. At the rate we are going, this industry will have been destroyed as well as many thousands of jobs that are dependent upon it.

I believe it is the responsibility of members of this House who represent constituencies that are dependent to a large extent on the fishing industry to bring these questions to the attention of the minister. I certainly make no apology for so doing. I hope that in the few minutes remaining the minister will address himself to these very serious questions.

**Mr. Davis:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to make only one very important point. In the past 18 months we have managed to get together all of the nations fishing in the North Atlantic. They have agreed not only on a basic principle, a principle of sustained yield operations, but also on the shares of a sustained yield operation. In other words, they have agreed to stabilize the fishery. More than that, they have agreed to help rebuild the stocks of all species in the North Atlantic. Canada in the future will have the largest share under this sustained yield plan. One of our problems at the moment, and this is particularly true of Labrador, is that our allocation is very much greater than we have ever managed to catch in the past. We have a great challenge concerning our fishery on the coast to move out and take the quota allocated to Canada.

We have a sustained yield operation in the North Atlantic by international agreement. The first agreement of this nature was last June under the ICNAF authority. We now

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have a larger share, a larger quota, a larger amount of fish to take which is allocated to Canada than has ever been the case in the past. It is up to the industry on the east coast to show what it can do now that we have a larger quota.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to ask the minister what we are doing to police this agreement regarding a sustained yield. As the minister well knows, most ICNAF agreements have been characterized by the inability of the member nations to live up to the agreement.

**Mr. Davis:** Mr. Chairman, we are making progress. As the hon. member says, in the past it has been a lawless operation in the Atlantic. Two years ago we got agreement among all of the fishing nations that protective officers from any country in the North Atlantic could board vessels of another country. We have the opportunity to board vessels. We are also organizing overflights. We have a new liaison between National Defence and our fisheries service which keeps track of all foreign vessels in the bank areas anywhere off the east coast. We do not yet have all the vessels we need to carry out the on-board checking operations. We have a large allocation of funds to build larger vessels which will enable us to go far from our coasts to inspect these foreign vessels and carry out police action. Because of the drawing of the fisheries lines, we do not have the same problems in our inland waters and we will be able to devote more time to the offshore operations.

**Mr. Marshall:** Mr. Chairman, when the North Atlantic countries met last year in Bonn, Germany, an all-party resolution, which the hon. member for Laprairie was instrumental in drafting, was presented asking all NATO countries for an investigation into the depletion of marine resources in the North Atlantic. It was accepted by all countries in the North Atlantic which are affected by the depletion of marine resources. I gave the Minister of the Environment a copy of this resolution. There has not been anything since that time to indicate that the Canadian government is aware of this resolution. As this was done on a non-partisan basis, will the minister indicate, prior to the Law of the Sea Conference, whether Canada, which is greatly affected, will get the co-operation that is expected?

**Mr. Davis:** I should like to tell the hon. member through you, Mr. Chairman, that Canada is taking a leading role. We are probably putting a far greater scientific input into the next Law of the Sea Conference, in so far as fisheries is concerned, than any other nation. The hon. member should bear in mind that Canadian initiative was responsible for the meeting of more than 60 fishing nations which is taking place right now in Vancouver. We have managed, through the United Nations, to get the fishing countries of the world together to talk about principles of sound management and sustained yield operations. That is what the current meeting in Vancouver is all about.

• (2150)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Davis:** At that meeting we are not talking in terms of slicing up the pie but in terms of how to make the pie larger—how best to manage the fisheries of the world. We