

## Government policy unclear

## Joint ventures threaten fishery

by Bob Wakeham

ST. JOHN'S, NFLD. -

-Because of a basic mistrust of government and the fact that Newfoundland has a history of betrayal and sell-out of its resources, the fisherman's union here is not exactly jumping for joy at the prospects of joint fishing ventures between Canadian and foreign companies.

Joint fishing ventures allow foreign fleets and fishermen to catch the Canadian quotas of fish which this country's undersized fleets cannot handle. Under the joint venture, this fish would then be processed in Newfoundland, thus creating jobs in the fish processing sector, but not in the fishing or fishing-related sectors.

The Newfoundland Fishermen, Food and Allied Workers Union, numbering 10,000



Joint ventures could triple employment in fish processing for Newfoundland, but pose a definite threat to the development of the fishing industry as a whole.

members is committed to the policy that would have all the resources in the Northwest Atlantic harvested by Canadian fishermen in Canadian owned and operated vessels.

"Our real concern about the joint ventures," says union president Richard Cashin, "is a basic mistrust of government."

Neither the federal nor the provincial government has a comprehensive fisheries policy, he said in a recent interview.

The union also distrusts the fish corporations, pointing to the fact that although the companies initially opposed joint ventures, they all jumped on the supportive bandwagon once the first of the so-called pilot projects involving a foreign country was approved.

"The minute the first one was approved, they all wanted one," Mr. Cashin noted. "They're

only profit and loss-oriented."

The federal government claims that these first co-operative arrangements with foreign countries are simply a "data-gathering tool to assist in building a brighter future for Canadian fishermen."

They say they will move cautiously in approving any applications from Canadian

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companies to become involved with the foreign fleets.

But the concern of a great many people in Newfoundland is that these pilot projects will eventually be expanded, despite Ottawa's contention that they are only to be utilized as a learning experience, and will lead to a dominance of the Canadian fishing by foreign vessels, at the expense of the fishermen.

With the large foreign vessels catching part of the Canadian quota and landing it in Newfoundland fish plants, government will continue to put what is described as the "development" of the Canadian fishery.

But according to the union, signs of that development must become definite in the near future or it will not support any further co-operative ventures between Canadians and foreigners.

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The basis of the union's present co-operation and future co-operation, Mr. Cashin has told Premier Frank Moores, is that there must be a clear and practical indication that the government of Newfoundland is willing to develop a comprehensive fisheries policy, "something which in our view has not been tackled completely at any time in our history."

The union has also told the province that certain basic principles should be incorporated in such a plan, including an immediate indication from government that steps will be taken to increase catching capacity in Newfoundland, either by purchase or leasing of European trawlers or building new trawlers and new mid-shore and near-shore vessels.

Government should also establish a provincial marketing agency consistent with the principles laid down by the federal government of consolidation of marketing, the union says.

It feels that one large Newfoundland

marketing agency in which the private companies and governments will have equity, plus representation from the fishermen, would be an ideal structure to supervise and to develop a marketing strategy for Newfoundland producers.

Government should also take the initiative in developing a new system for the establishment of fish prices to primary producers.

The union feels that the future development of the inshore and near-shore fishery, particularly on the Northeast Coast, depends to what extent we permit the northern stocks to regenerate so as to favorably affect the growth of the inshore fishery.

"We are not satisfied that the federal government has given us all the information and the alternate courses of action open to Canada with regard to the management of our northern cod stocks, particularly as they affect our inshore fishery," Mr. Cashin has told the premier.

He said it is the belief of many that fishing northern cod stock in the winter months should be banned and that the benefits to Canada of a regenerated northern cod stock will be immense.

"There is a school of thought that believes Canadian fishermen can catch this fish at times other than the winter months and that, therefore, there would be no need for ice-strengthened vessels of foreign fishing effort," Mr. Cashin said.

Generally speaking, Mr. Cashin said, "if Newfoundland can devise a comprehensive fisheries policy, then ultimately we will be catching and processing the fish off our shores."

If this is to be successful we will need new market development and technical assistance, he said, and it is with these objectives in mind that the union is prepared to consider the joint venture pilot project.

"We do feel it would be unfortunate if the rationale for this was the creation of a few extra

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jobs," he said. "We believe that the time has long passed when we should stop the repetition of this same old line and start to develop our own strategy for survival."

Well up to 8,000 people are now working in the island's fish processing industry. That number could possibly be tripled if foreign-caught fish are processed on the island.

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been treated at the Halifax Infirmary. The sex attractant substance which confuses the budworm moth so as to effectively prevent mating is currently under study at St. Francis Xavier University, under the direction of Dr. Brian Lynch, but at this stage, this substance is considered to be prohibitively expensive.

Finally, on February 3rd, the decision came down from Cabinet and the first round went to the environmentalists and forest management group. What will happen now?

#### The future

Since 1970, Kings, Annapolis and Cumberland counties have suffered outbreaks of budworm infestation which are believed to have arisen through moth flights from New Brunswick and surprisingly, each spring, the forests have recovered. Also, a cold, wet spring this year could kill the budworm population (the insect thrives in hot, dry weather). L.S. Hawbolt has stated that the budworm food supply is very delicately balanced and that "the tree need not be even severely defoliated for the young budworm to starve for lack of food".

Also, the budworm controversy has contributed to a rethinking of the efficient use of Nova Scotia's forests. It became clear during the spraying controversy that Maritime forests are, in fact, grossly under-harvested. Private woodlot

#### A third world travel lesson

For example, the first world travel agents used to tell the ladies of China that their feet were naturally small which meant they weren't destined to go out into the world

The global experts recommended instead a simple vacation around the house and vigorous exercise on other parts of the anatomy

like the knees for serving  
like the knees for praying

Susan Perly

owners throughout the province registered over and over again one complaint — no market for their wood.

Dr. Stephen Manley suggested a solution: "There is enough dead wood in the forests here (in P.E.I.) to provide all the electrical energy needs of this province for at least a year, and besides that the wood that is dying annually could pretty well keep the burners going to provide electricity if it could be harvested."

Clarence Porter, past President of the Nova Scotia Forest Products Association, said "there is enough low-grade hardwood in this province to maintain wood-burning plants indefinitely". He added "plants using wood for fuel would harvest a renewable resource which is plentiful in Nova Scotia."

One thing is clear: the future looks good because with proper management, Maritime forests can be made "budworm proof". L.S. Hawbolt has said "the problem is a complex and long-term one. A farmer can plant a seed in the ground this spring, and harvest the produce in the fall, but with the forest for a field, it takes a whole generation to see the end result."