

Supply

community says it believes in, as enunciated by the Brundtland commission in 1987.

This is, I believe, one of the worst examples of ecological and environmental catastrophe that is present before the world today. People talk about the threat to the tropical forests. They concern themselves about the ozone layer and the like. There are a great number of people who are concerned about seals and seals are not a stock that is in danger at all. There is no threat. Seals as a separate species of animals are not threatened at all. In fact, their numbers have grown beyond all comprehension. They have doubled in the last seven or eight years. The harp and the hood seal were never threatened with extinction.

We notice that some people are apparently so concerned about them that they will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on silly advertisements saying that seals do not eat cod. As the Minister of Fisheries in Newfoundland suggested the other day, what do they do? He has never seen them lined up waiting for Kentucky Fried Chicken. I have never seen them eat popsicles. They certainly eat something that is in the ocean. We know they eat capelin and they eat cod and they eat other fish species.

Although seals are not endangered as a species at all, some people go absolutely bonkers at the thought that there should be any killing of seals or any culling of seals. Now, it is a separate issue. What is threatened and what I am concerned about is not seals because they are not in danger. It is fish stocks that are in danger and specifically the northern cod stock, which is the reason why Newfoundland was settled in the first place hundreds of years ago and flatfish stocks, as I explained in New York on Tuesday when I was there.

The American plaice, the witch flounder, the yellow tail flounder, are three valuable flatfish stocks which the European communities of Spain and Portugal have so overfished by ignoring NAFO quotas in the last four or five years that the NAFO quotas have had to be reduced by 50 to 60 per cent. NAFO scientists have had to flatly say they can no longer estimate what the total allowable catches for those species should be because they simply do not have the information. They do not know how much has been discarded. We have the same people, the Spanish in particular, and the Portuguese catching juvenile flatfish, using mesh sizes not permitted by NAFO to

catch these small juvenile fish that they are catching in the nursery grounds outside the 200-mile limit.

That is what we should keep our eye on and not get diverted. As Mr. Diefenbaker once said when Richard Cashin interrupted a speech he was making in the House, "When the big game hunter is out after big game, he does not get diverted by rabbit tracks". We should not get diverted by seal tracks and advertisements by people who claim that they are environmentalists, such as the Fund for Animal Welfare that made a fortune a few years ago in wrecking the seal hunt, spending \$100,000 on these silly newspaper advertisements this week.

• (1100)

What is endangered is not the seal. It is not any mammal, it is not any marine mammal. It is a species of fish, the flatfish that I mentioned and the northern cod in particular.

The hon. member said we failed to act on this. We have not failed to act on this. We have acted in dozens of ways, innumerable ways to try to prevent this overfishing taking place outside our 200-mile economic zone. Inside we have a tremendous system of surveillance and enforcement. We have observers on every trawler that fishes inside the 200-mile limit. On every foreign trawler and even on our own trawlers we have observers to make sure we know what is being caught, what is being discarded, what the species are and that the rules are observed.

Outside the 200-mile limit there is a very ineffective system of surveillance and management which we have been trying to get improved through NAFO. But as to failing to act on this one, since November or December of 1988, when we learned of the scientist's newly rejiggered estimates of what the state of the northern cod stock was, our efforts in this direction have been untiring in trying to overcome the foreign overfishing that is occurring on the nose and tail of the Grand Banks.

As Minister for International Trade, on every occasion when I met the Minister for External Affairs, the Minister of Trade for the European Community Mr. Frans Andriessen, I brought this matter up with him.

I have attended several meetings with Manuel Marin, Fisheries Commissioner of the European Community. I have been at meetings in Spain and Portugal pursuing these matters with the foreign ministers, ministers of fisheries and trade ministers of those countries. I have