

Supply

Mr. Proud: Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my hon. colleague from Cardigan for his excellent speech.

I would like to make a few comments. The fishing industry of Prince Edward Island is responsible for 30.7 per cent of the province's exports. Together with tourism and agriculture, it is one of the big three economic staples of our province.

The economic contribution that the fishing industry makes to Canada, particularly on the west coast and in Atlantic Canada, is significant. The fishing industry's contribution to my province's gross provincial product is approximately 13 per cent. In Nova Scotia it is 11 per cent, while in Newfoundland it is the highest in Canada, at about 15 per cent.

In Atlantic Canada, there are over 100,000 fishermen and fish processors. They all depend on a stable Atlantic fisheries industry for employment. Now with lower quotas being imposed by the federal government, these Canadians are looking square into the eye of the storm, "hurricane unemployment". Federal scientists are now recommending even further cuts to an already beleaguered Atlantic fishing industry. They are recommending cuts to fish quotas for next year, while at the same time our federal ministers of international trade and fisheries are having no success in convincing the European community to halt its over-fishing. Once again the EEC is refusing to adhere to quotas set by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization.

It will not adhere to the conservation measures established by NAFO last month. We have the minister giving assurances that Atlantic Canadians have a right to expect that the European community will reduce its self-appointed quotas.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I thought he was rising on a question or comment on the hon. member from Cardigan's intervention. Is he? The hon. member may continue. The hon. member from Cardigan has a response? No further questions or comments. Resuming debate.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Madam Speaker, members on this side of the House have been and will continue to draw the true picture of the present crisis in

the east coast fishery and the pending disaster in the west coast fishery which will result from the recent bilateral panel ruling.

My colleagues from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, have adequately addressed many of the problems of the off-shore and other particular fisheries. For my part, I will address my remarks to the Atlantic and the Prince Edward Island lobster fishery and the present and future of that fishery.

The many-headed hydra of free trade which has just struck down the west coast fishermen is preparing to strike the east coast lobster fishermen. Yes, the free trade agreement which was supposed to give us assured entry to the great American market is actually going to limit entry to that market-place for the Atlantic lobster fishermen.

This is what is happening. Over the years, Canada has managed its fishery. Anyone who knows anything about fisheries management realizes it is a most difficult task, but it has been one which Canada pioneered, because it realized a long time ago that the resource would disappear if good management practices were not implemented.

As a result of this realization, Canada instituted seasons, quotas, limited entry and minimum size in order to preserve stocks for future Canadians and to ensure the present generation of fishermen the opportunity to earn a good living for themselves and their families.

The Americans instituted no such policy. The American way was to fish a stock to its death and then move on to another stock. Take the Alaskan or king crab, for example. American fishermen fished that stock to near extinction and abandoned the fishery.

• (1630)

The American lobster fishermen who until now had implemented few lobster management practices in the past have had to increase the minimum lobster carapace for size in their fishery in order to conserve their stock.

The Americans now have a minimum carapace size of 3.25 inches. This will give their lobsters a chance to spawn a number of more times before they are fished. This should result in more lobster in the future for American fishermen.