

For the coastal fisherman of the Maritimes or of British Columbia, dependent on the stocks that in turn depend upon his home waters, overfishing by others can spell the end of his livelihood. Only by applying management controls, such as quotas and seasonal limits -- for example, during spawning -- can the maximum yield be available each year to coastal fishermen and long-range ships alike.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in preventing overfishing arises from the freedom of the high seas concept. If fishing vessels in increasing numbers can go wherever they please and harvest any stock to the limits of their capacity, two dangerous problems arise:

- conservation becomes impossible, and
- coastal states with foreign fleets on their doorsteps are deprived of a resource on which they depend.

Canada is directly affected by both these problems. With fishing communities on both coasts, we must protect the fisherman's livelihood, as well as the resources on which he depends. Farther from home, proper conservation measures will have to be applied throughout the world, or there will not be enough fish left for anyone, anywhere. This is becoming strikingly true for the tuna fisheries in the offshore waters of both the Atlantic and Pacific.

Canada's approach to these problems is good management of fisheries, as part of the broader need for management of the whole marine environment.

A consensus appears to be emerging that within a 200-mile economic zone, coastal states should have exclusive rights over all living resources. This trend meets Canada's main objectives. It would allow the coastal state to have a determining voice in both the management and the exploitation of fisheries resources.

Of course, this 200-mile concept does not entirely cover Canada's needs. There exist off the east coast large concentrations of fish stocks beyond that rather arbitrary limit. However, I believe it will be possible to marry this zone limitation with our more functional approach. This approach was designed to provide specific solutions for the specific problems arising from the different life habits of the various types of fish and other comestible marine creatures. What is likely to come out of the Conference is a regime that will ensure that the coastal state can take fish to the limit of its capacity. With this right, there would be an agreed system that would provide for adequate management of all stocks by the coastal state. At the same time, other states would be allowed to participate in the harvesting of the surplus available.

There will, of course, also have to be special arrangements to handle special problems such as the paramount rights of coastal states over what are called the anadromous species, like salmon, and other special categories of fish such as the wide-ranging species, like whales and tuna.

Over the last few weeks, we have had strong indications that such extended jurisdiction for the coastal state will indeed attract the support of a large majority of states.