

Supply

should not have to do it. It is not the job of the fishermen to protect Canadian sovereignty, it is the job of the federal government. The only job fishermen wish to do is to go out and catch fish, have a fair supply and receive a fair return. Unfortunately, the government is asleep at the switch and is not defending our interests.

Nobody is really talking about the navy blowing the Spanish trawlers out of the water. What we are talking about is using the navy and the Coast Guard in an effective and aggressive way to protect our interests. If we can protect Kuwait, surely to God we can protect ourselves.

Members opposite have a habit of going back 10 or 20 years to find bad things the Liberal government did. One thing they will never find is a Liberal decision to abandon Canadians in time of need in the name of diplomacy. The Liberal Party has always defended the interests of Canadians, first and foremost. When action was needed, Liberals took action.

We have a government that is sitting on the sidelines talking. Talking might be fine for the embassies of Europe, but it is doing nothing for the Canadian fishermen. The government has tried the diplomatic route and it has failed. Now the government must move to extend Canadian jurisdiction to the nose and tail of the Grand Banks. Anything less than this is unacceptable. If the government fails now, the fishery could be destroyed. For the sake of fishermen, plant workers and people in Atlantic Canada, I urge the government to end this destruction and stand up for the Canadian fishermen.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Would the member be kind enough to give us his view as to why the weak-wristed people opposite, and I see the minister of external affairs opposite, have not seen fit to ratify the Law of the Sea convention? Perhaps he has a view on that. I think most of us in this House find it to be very hard to swallow when we hear it, and I suppose we will hear shortly from the minister, getting up and telling us why it is that they cannot ratify the Law of the Sea convention. The minister might not have heard the minister of fisheries this morning who was asked that question very clearly. He got up, and after comparing

himself to Sylvester Stallone, did not even grapple with the question, let alone answer it.

Mr. MacAulay: I want to thank my hon. colleague. When we look at the problem of overfishing and the quotas, the European Community was given 20,049 metric tons and they indicated they fished 46,000. Our figures indicate they fished 58,000 metric tons. This was quota, fish they received quota for.

The fish they did not receive quota for, it is indicated they took in total 152,950 out of a total quota of 20,049. From what I understand, the Law of the Sea gives preference to coastal states. I think now we are in a desperate situation on the east coast and the nose and tail of the Grand Banks. It is time that we take action in this country to stand up for the fishermen and extend control to the nose and tail and then see how it will be dealt with. If we do not take unilateral action and move in this country, there will be no reason to move very shortly. The fishery will be destroyed and the stocks will be gone. Now is the time to stand up for our Canadian fishermen.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): First of all, I want to say how much I appreciated the remarks by my friend from Prince Edward Island from the riding of Cardigan. He knows better than most members in this Chamber, I submit, certainly better than many what job loss means to rural Canadians, whether they live on Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland or elsewhere in this country. Many of his constituents are fishermen and many are farmers, but all of them, like my constituents, are really the subject, the guts of this particular motion that we are discussing today. These are people who live close to nature, close to the earth, close to the sea in the case of the fishermen.

• (1630)

I would submit that he, better than many people in this Chamber if there were time, could relate to us the kind of devastation, the kind of heartache that results when men and women have their livelihood yanked out from under them and have their way of life under threat.

I had no particular question for the member, but I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank him for what he said in this debate. Having a voice from Prince Edward Island to lend to the growing call for some action on this