

N.W. Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act

fishing efforts of all countries in the North Atlantic it can be a success.

It is making a beginning on haddock. Quotas are now being set up to establish a fishery which will first of all recover and then operate on a sustained yield basis on Georges Bank. An important conference is to take place in Rome next February, an interim meeting of the members of the North Atlantic fishing community. This conference will deal with the matter of quotas. Hopefully, and certainly this is the thrust of the Canadian submission, quotas will be set in respect of herring. Canadian fishermen take half the herring. But, we have a continuing interest in this particular species and there are indications that it, too, is approaching the point of over-exploitation.

Our basic approach is to establish a managed fishery not only in our own exclusive limits but out over all our continental shelf—which in places extends 400 miles into the Atlantic—and all of the slope beyond it and to insist that in future it is by agreement, a managed fishery. It would be necessary for the scientists of the member countries, all 14 of them, to agree on condition of the stock that exist there, the numbers of fish that should be conserved and on a maximum catch, thus ensuring useful production for the indefinite future. There is the tricky question, but I am sure it can be answered, of sharing out the sustainable yield between nations. Finally, there is the matter of policing the extent of the catch and the manner in which the catch is taken. The bill before us addresses itself to the question of policing the catch of all important species.

I was asked several questions today. The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) asked whether other countries would share in the policing of this fishing effort. It is true that Canadian fisheries protection vessels will be patrolling off our shelf and a number of other countries will not have vessels of that character in the area. We will be doing more than our share of the policing. Perhaps this is as it should be because we claim it is our shelf. It is much closer to our shores and thus much easier for us to do the policing.

This bill gives us the authority to go on board any vessel of any other country and we will be doing more of this type of inspection. The Canadian taxpayer will be putting up much of the money. When the whole scheme is in effect and all the stocks of the north Atlantic are under a sustained yield management, I think we can then claim, as a coastal state, to have a special position, to have put more into the shelf management operation than the other countries, to be entitled to an increasing share of the pie, so to speak, and to be on the inside track when it comes to sharing of stocks of new species caught in the area. I would hesitate to ask other countries to share in the policing activity when I think this could be a good thing for the future, to assert our sovereignty and to obtain a larger share of the catch under good management in the longer run.

Questions were asked about Atlantic salmon. This is another threatened species of fish. The fishery has been over-exploited all along the east coast of the Atlantic. It is now confined largely to rivers in Canada, principally Labrador, the north shore of Quebec and New Brunswick. There has been fishing pressure from European countries in recent years off Greenland. The Danes are progressive-

ly pulling out of that fishery, partly because they expect to go into the European Common Market which precludes them from fishing around Greenland, and partly because the fishery itself has fallen off. They are getting out of the salmon fishery and, using the same fishing vessels, they are fishing off Africa. Indeed, the Danish government is subsidizing the conversion of its salmon vessels, still about a dozen in number, for use in fisheries in other parts of the world.

• (4:30 p.m.)

Our basic approach to the next Law of the Sea Conference and our basic approach to the North Atlantic fishery with respect to salmon is that there should be no fishing by any nation beyond the exclusive limits of that nation. If our resolution passes, at the 1973 Law of the Sea Conference and that law becomes the law of the sea with respect to salmon, there will be no high seas salmon fishery to police, because no nation would take salmon on the high seas.

Our remaining problem will be of course, that any Canadian salmon or salmon spawned in Canadian rivers which swims to within 12 miles of Greenland and which inhabits those waters will continue to be taken by the Eskimos based in Greenland. There will be a continuing problem in that regard, but it will be nothing like the problem we have recently experienced with respect to the unrestricted fishery for Canadian salmon on the high seas.

There was reference to the action which Iceland is proposing. Iceland is now proposing to extend its 12-mile fishing limit to 50 miles. Iceland's principal reason for the change is that the 50-mile limit around Iceland neatly includes most of the continental shelf off Iceland. It does not include all of it; it includes all but a part of it.

Their 50 mile limit is a simple limit; it is easy for captains of fishing vessels to observe. As I say, it is an Icelandic formula. It does not suit Canada because we have a much larger continental shelf. If we were to set it at 50 miles, that would mean that we would have to exclude the 350 miles of the Grand Banks extending eastward from Newfoundland. We intend to include the whole of our shelf, which is, of course, a bigger shelf. We intend to cover the whole shelf and hope to gain management control over the sustained operations over the whole of the shelf. We will share the product of the shelf on a sustained basis with other nations, do the bulk of the policing, if that is the wish of the other nations and, in effect be the manager if not the total exploiter of our shelf.

Mr. Crouse: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister would permit a question. Would he indicate when we can anticipate an announcement by the minister of that policy which he has just enunciated, namely, that we intend to go for the management of the fisheries resources of our entire continental shelf.

Mr. Davis: I think the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse) will recall that one of the first speeches I made as Minister of Fisheries I made in Boston. It was about ten pages long and explained our policy. What I said then has been our policy ever since. It is the approach we will take at the next Law of the Sea Conference. We want to make

[Mr. Davis.]