

Private Members' Business

This is an unprecedented step. It will go down in history as an unprecedented move by any government. History will record why it was necessary. Let me explain why it was necessary. We have as a result of this action Canadian trawlers that are secured to the dock and processing plants that are closed. Foreign fleets can still fish with impunity outside the 200-mile zone.

The concern is that the European Community countries have more than overstepped their mark. They have more than caught their quotas and have more than ignored the warnings, the admonitions and yes, the diplomatic efforts of this government to cease and desist.

• (1710)

For the record, I want to give you some indication of how badly these transgressions have been. Since 1986 the European Community has consistently exceeded its quotas allocated by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. I will use the abbreviation NAFO. It has no less than plundered the cod stock. NAFO, I should explain, is responsible for managing 10 fish stocks, groundfish, off the northeast coast of Newfoundland.

In 1986 Spain and Portugal in particular, which were new members, began setting their own quotas of the NAFO-managed stock and on northern cod, which is recognized as a Canadian stock.

Here are some examples: In 1986 the European Community's NAFO quota for all groundfish species—and I will round the figures off—was 26,000 tonnes. What was the catch? One hundred and eleven thousand tonnes. Between 1987 and 1991 the quotas totalled 90,000 tonnes but they reported catches of 270,000 tonnes.

In 1990 the European Community fleet scooped up 98,000 tonnes of groundfish worth more than \$100 million. This amount was 82,000 tonnes in excess of the NAFO allocation. Non-NAFO fleets took an additional 40,000. The impact of this overfishing has been devastating.

The scope of this piracy was even greater when their catches of northern cod are singled out. It had a northern cod quota of 9,500 tonnes in both years of 1986 and 1987 and was not allocated any quotas beyond; 1988, 1989, 1990 and 1991. Yet, during this six-year period the European Community harvested more than 220,000

tonnes. I have to say now that a thousand tonnes of cod relates purely to about 30 to 40 jobs. If we look at the seasonal nature of the industry it works out to about 100 full-time jobs. So a thousand tonnes is 100 jobs. I just talked about plundering 220,000 tonnes.

During this six-year period the Canadian total allowable catch for northern cod fell by 28 per cent, from 266,000 tonnes to 199,000 tonnes. The European Community increased its effort by 30 per cent and our total allowable catch was reduced by 30 per cent, to speak in rough figures.

As deplorable as this is, what was the government in power doing at the time? A good question. Let me describe what it has done.

In response to this blatant overfishing the European Community had been denied allocations of non-surplus stocks in Canadian waters. Then we had the constant travel across the Atlantic by the external affairs minister and the minister of fisheries. We had members of the diplomatic corps and civil servants from the Department of External Affairs, and indeed politicians, going across in the last four years to try to get the message across to the European Community countries that we will not be able to withstand this, it must stop overfishing. It is like telling a child that he or she cannot do something, and yet not resorting to any form of carrot and stick philosophy.

The Conservative government continued to place its faith in NAFO, oblivious to the fact that this has been shown to be a feeble organization with absolutely no powers of enforcement.

NAFO instituted a hail system in which the fishing vessels were required to report when they entered or left NAFO zones. The system was intended to make it more difficult to misrepresent or under-report catches. Violators would be answerable only to the authorities in their native countries. If you transgress against Canada go back to Spain or Portugal and see what your government wants to do about it.

Here is another example of the stick and carrot method and how effective this was: The European Community was assigned a patrol vessel to the northwest Atlantic for seven months in 1991. The idea of the vessel was to complement Canada's aerial surveillance outside the 200-mile zone, specifically in the nose and tail of the banks.