

When we arrive at the point at which these crucial decisions must be made they might relate to new agreements or new régimes regarding the exploitation of resources, or to the suggestion made by the hon. member for St. John's East, that is, to the threat of sanctions against other nations which will not give due recognition to our needs and requirements—I hope that our own house will be in order so that Canada can speak with an effective voice in these international councils.

These considerations are important, not only for a particular industry in this country but also in the long range, as many distinguished scientists and others have suggested. In the long run, the survival of the human race may well depend on whether we learn properly to use and manage the resources of the sea, particularly the rich, living resources of the sea which can provide an important part of the total food requirements of the human race.

I say in conclusion, without speaking in detail about the situation regarding Atlantic salmon which was the subject of the speech of the hon. member for St. John's East, that I regret that the minister felt he had to take the steps to impose the kind of restrictions upon the Atlantic salmon fishery that he recently announced. May I also say in passing—this may surprise the hon. member for St. John's East that the fishermen in British Columbia would be much happier if the restrictions which we know must be imposed in British Columbia with regard to the licensing and taking of the salmon resources of the Pacific were based more on the principles which the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry followed in respect of the Atlantic fishery, rather than on the approach, technique and philosophy that the minister adopted with respect to the Pacific resources.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker—and I am referring particularly to the Atlantic salmon situation—that we all hope that Denmark will follow the obviously sensible course of embarking upon some kind of reciprocal arrangement on the utilization of that resource. Perhaps the arrangement could be similar to some of those we have been able to work out with nations on the Pacific coast. Although those arrangements have not worked out ideally or to the complete satisfaction of all fishermen of Canada or the United States over the years, nevertheless there have been situations, such as the one respecting the fishery of the Fraser River, in which an obvious and common sense arrangement was worked out for sharing the catch.

It may very well be that that kind of arrangement could be worked out as far as the Atlantic salmon is concerned, because we must consider that apparently their feeding grounds are within the territorial waters of one of Denmark's possessions. I hope that will be the upshot of any discussions, Mr. Speaker, because I for one hope we can deal with this matter rationally. I hope that the kind of confrontation suggested by the hon. member for St. John's East will not become necessary.

When the bill goes to committee we shall want to hear further particulars about the work of the commission, how this proposed policing arrangement will be carried out, by whom it will be carried out, and that sort of

N.W. Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act

thing. When the bill comes back to the House for third reading I hope we will view the picture somewhat more optimistically than we can view it on the basis of the facts now before us.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, first may I congratulate the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) for putting into perspective for the first time in this House, so far as I am aware, the problem of the salmon fishery as it relates to the Danes. He presented a substantial argument against some of the actions of the minister who has placed the blame unfairly on the shoulders of Canadian fishermen and not squarely on the shoulders of the Danish government, where it belongs. I thought his presentation was commendable.

Bill S-13 is a very minor piece of legislation. Even so, we support it. I think that the ratification of the International Convention on the North Atlantic Fishery in June, 1970, was a good beginning to the solution of a particular problem. In his presentation I thought the minister made a rather puny attempt to indicate the extent of the effort the Canadian government has made to bring about changed conservation methods on the Atlantic coast that have been recommended for 22 years by the members of ICNAF. He talked about regulations which have been adopted. He talked about mesh sizes of nets, the idea being that only fish of a certain size would be taken. He talked about the mistake of overfishing on the Georges Bank, and especially the overharvesting of haddock. Mr. Speaker, it is inexcusable that the minister did not stand in the House today and outline in substantial detail the efforts the government has made in the conservation of our resources.

In my effort to bring some perspective to this problem I will try to outline the history of our fisheries on the one hand and the history of our conservation efforts in the last 22 years on the other. Perhaps I ought to call our conservation measures efforts at conservation, or promises of conservation. According to our history books, our fisheries started in the latter part of the fifteenth century. Anyone researching our history books will find that codfish supplies were plentiful at that time. Actually, codfish was the staple diet and industry of the people who eventually formed the Canadian nation. Codfish was so plentiful, according to reports I have read, that it was possible to dip up the fish from the shores and beaches of what eventually became Newfoundland. According to stories, harvesting methods were very simple: fishermen had only to go out a little distance, lower their nets or their baskets overboard and bring up a plentiful quantity of codfish. This primitive method of harvesting was possible mainly because of plentiful supplies.

● (4:30 p.m.)

Throughout the years there have been various developments. We have gone through the stage of having 30 or 35-foot boats. These are still in use. People have used traditional methods such as trawling, the use of codjiggers and handlines. The fish harvested were in plentiful supply. Traditional Newfoundlanders as well as present-