

tions that we are going to have to take. What has the Government of Canada done? It has cut the legal affairs division of external affairs by almost \$2 million. Where is it going to get the lawyers? Where is it going to get the research to mount the kind of battle that is going to be required?

Furthermore, not content with just cutting its own bureaucrats, it totally wiped out the world renowned International Centre for Ocean Development which has provided, over the years, some of the best research on fishing, on environment, on ocean management and on the international Law of the Sea. We do not even have the kind of intellectual muscle to go to work on behalf of Canada because this government does not believe in providing the kind of sound, hard reasoning.

Do those few facts alone tell us that this is a government that really cares, that really is committed, that is going the last mile and using every resource possible? Hardly, Madam Speaker. Maybe the best reason is that I do not think it believes in what it is doing. I think it is all for show.

In fact, I will give a final commentary. The information campaign that was supposed to inform the rest of the world about the problems in the northwest fishery has also had a line in the budget, from \$135,000 to 0. This is a government that is standing up for the northwest fishery, but it cannot bother to spend 5 cents to let the rest of the world know what the problems are. Is that a government fully committed to the battle? Is that a government going to the barricades with all swords brandishing? It seems to me it is a government that is meekly, sneakily crawling off into the night because it does not have a case.

Let me come to the crucial issue. We all know that this thing must be resolved in an international context and that is why I want to speak today, because I find that the arguments used by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Secretary of State for External Affairs to be weak and fallacious when it comes to the right of Canada to take a stand.

I heard the minister this morning and he said: "We have freedom of the high seas. International law backs us on this issue. Canada has no authority beyond 200 miles.

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We do not recognize it. We are going to continue to fight if it comes down to a question of confrontation." He said: "We are limited. Once we get out of that 200 mile zone it is like a wall we cannot climb."

Twenty years ago when a previous government was faced with a serious environmental problem in the Arctic waters this Parliament was given a bill called the Arctic Waters Pollution Act which established unilaterally the right of Canada to protect on behalf of the entire international system those precious, delicate, fragile Arctic waters. That was a unilateral action.

As a result of that unilateral action we were able to push the rest of the world into recognizing the right of coastal states to defend environmental requirements beyond its own. We took the initiative, we established a case and the rest of the world agreed. That is why in the resolution presented by my hon. colleague from Burin—St. George's we say it is time for this government to take action, to bring legislation into this House, asserting the right of Canada to exercise management in that area on behalf of the entire international environment.

We are not asking for a bigger grab bag for Canada. We are saying that if somebody does not take action there will not be any cod at all. It will be a resource that will virtually disappear as a sustainable food resource for the rest of the world. To give that kind of legislative initiative some credence and credibility, this government today, as soon as it can, must ratify the international Law of the Sea.

It is tragic and criminal that one of the most important international initiatives undertaken by Canada during the 1970s, up to 1982, signified that there has to be a rule of law on the high seas where there can be a dispute settlement mechanism. This minister was the minister of trade.

He used to run up and down Canada saying: "We have to have a dispute settlement mechanisms". The Law of the Sea has a dispute settlement mechanism, but because President Reagan in 1982 picked up the phone and said to our Prime Minister: "Back off, Brian", we are no longer prepared to become a major advocate or supporter of the Law of the Sea. Canada, to its disgrace, has yet to ratify that fundamental, international law.