

Supply

swer. They have got to do better than that. If I had time I would elaborate, but perhaps on another occasion.

Mr. Reid: Madam Speaker, I really do not know where to start. I will have the opportunity later today to respond in more detail. I think, though, I cannot let pass the comments that the hon. member across the way made concerning overfishing, and 3PS I hope I do not have to remind him who signed the agreement in 1972. I hope I do not have to remind him that to try to resolve what emerged from 1972 this government went through a lot. I would use words that would probably have him on his feet to have me condemned for being out of order. This government managed to get the Government of France to a table, to arbitrate an agreement, to resolve the very difficult problem of management and deal with an arbitration in terms of the disputed boundary. This government managed to do that and was able to ensure that the fleet out of France took 10,000 tonnes less in 3PS on a declining scale. I know the Minister is going to pop up and say, yes, we gave them northern cod to do it. Yes we did, less than 1 per cent of what is there. The government said they could have that. But what it does not give our fishermen, what we in this country take less of, they will take less of, too.

As well, we have an arrangement that if they fish outside inappropriately, they do not get what is inside. What we have given them inside is gone. But we continue down the road to working out an agreement. I just wanted to remind my hon. friend across the way of that.

Mr. Simmons: I say to the member for St. John's East that the government did not bring the French to the table. They got this government on the mat. In 1985, 1986 and 1987, the quota, as the member will know, was of the order of 6,500 metric tonnes. They stole 26,000 metric tonnes. Then our brain from St. John's West goes over there, aided and abetted by the gentleman from St. John's East—and I do not know why he is involved in this, he is such a decent chap—they go over and get the French to agree not to take 26,000 tonnes. They were only supposed to take 6,400 tonnes. So they talk the French down and they agree not to steal 26,000 tonnes, but to steal only 17,000 tonnes. The Minister comes back and says, "What a victory. We actually convinced them that instead of taking 6,400 tonnes, they would take only 17,000 tonnes."

The member asked who signed the 1972 agreement. The Government of Canada under a Liberal regime signed the 1972 agreement and the was successful in administering it as follows. between 1972 and 1984 did the French overfish in 3PS. Not once. I challenge the member to contradict me.

Starting in 1985, after the change of government to the gentleman from Baie-Comeau, they overfished four to one; they overfished in 1986; the French overfished in 1987; they overfished in 1988; and now, in 1989, they are overfishing to the tune of three to one, 17,000 tonnes instead of 6,000 tonnes, aided and abetted by these members from St. John's East and St. John's West, who now want to take credit for allowing the French to steal three times as many fish as they were allowed to steal in the first place under the 1972 agreement.

The member states, yes, we signed that agreement and we are proud of it. The difference between the Liberals and that crowd is that we kept the French from overfishing and they cannot do it or will not do it.

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Madam Speaker, I realize that there are so many in the Liberal party who want to speak on this and our time is very short.

• (1530)

This problem is not just one of today; it comes back to the fact that the Department of Fisheries has not had the foresight under this minister to have optimism in the east coast fishery. It does not have optimism on the west coast fishery. The minister can stand up in the House and say that we have sovereign rights over our natural resource of fish, and yet he will continually say he will do nothing to protect us or help us establish the presence that we need in the market-place.

We have a natural resource. We have the capacity inshore and offshore on the east coast to catch everything that is within our 200-mile limit. Yet this minister says we do not have a right to it. Our fishermen have not fished for two seasons in a row because he has allowed foreign overfishing.

Who supports me on the foreign overfishing issue? The premier of our province says that this minister should stop listening to his armchair fishermen here in Ottawa and his scientists and managers. I do not know why they are managing, there has been no fishery to manage for the most part for the last six months. They are paying people to do nothing, certainly not to have new ideas. But this minister is even against Premier John