

European Community. Unfortunately, the German vessels have indeed taken over twice the allotted amount of fish from this stock which is viewed as being a Canadian stock. As well, there is a very serious conservation problem.

Earlier today the Secretary of State for External Affairs met with Mr. De Clercq, the EEC Commissioner for External Affairs. A meeting is scheduled on Saturday between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Foreign Minister of West Germany. I will be meeting with EEC officials on Monday, and I will be meeting with the Fisheries Minister of the Federal Republic of West Germany on Wednesday. I would like to assure the Hon. Member that this matter is viewed as being serious and is at this time being pursued vigorously at the highest level.

CANADIAN REPRESENTATIONS

Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, it is not only shocking what the West German fleet is doing, but the Minister's inaction is shocking as well. I would like the Minister to verify to the Chamber that Canada sent a diplomatic note to the EEC one month ago protesting this overfishing by the West German fleet. Will he confirm to the Chamber that the EEC responded bluntly on April 17 to the Canadian mission in Brussels, saying:

We do not recognize Canadian jurisdiction over this stock.

Will the Minister verify that, and will he tell the House why he did not close ports, impose sanctions, or cancel this agreement a month ago?

Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member points out very correctly that protests have been launched. He also points out that there has not been a satisfactory response. What the Hon. Member also knows, and what is important for the public of Canada to know, is that in addition to cod stocks which the German vessels took within the Canadian 200-mile limit, the recent fishing has been taking place outside the Canadian 200-mile limit. We do not have the authority to interfere physically with that.

• (1420)

The Hon. Member asked me to close ports. That has been considered, but we do not think that at the present time that would be conducive to finding a solution. The options which we have, with respect to future relations with the EEC and the Federal Republic of Germany in this matter, will be discussed in the next few days. I am sure the Hon. Member would not want me to comment on those discussions before I meet with them.

REACTION TO EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has confirmed that the EEC ignored Canada's diplomatic protest which was made a month ago. So, the question remains. Why has the Government taken this lying

down? Is it true that the reason is that the Prime Minister is in West Germany fishing for friends? Is that the real reason? While he is fishing for friends in West Germany, the West German fleet is here overfishing our resources.

Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that the probability of getting a resolution to this complex problem which, as I said, we do not have the jurisdiction to interfere with physically, is probably much better with friends than with enemies.

The Hon. Member, having raised a legitimate question, is now destroying the credibility of his outrage by trying to play politics. As I said earlier, extensive discussions are ongoing. I will be at those discussions on Monday, and again on Wednesday. I am sure that we will find an appropriate answer. The appropriate answer, in view of the fact that this stock is recognized as a Canadian-managed stock, is not to destroy the contractual agreement under which that understanding exists.

ACCESS TO CANADIAN WATERS

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, it is incredible that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans told us yesterday that he only heard about this matter on Tuesday. We now find out that a diplomatic note was sent a month ago, and that it was ignored two weeks ago. I do not know about the credibility and the outrage in the House today, but the Minister should get his facts straight.

The Minister said that the stock which is being overfished is outside Canada's 200-mile zone. He knows that the Spanish have been denied access to Canadian waters for the last half a dozen years because they overfished the same stock. Is he telling us now that the EEC can have its cake and eat it too? Is he telling us that the EEC can have a quota inside the Canadian zone, yet overfish just outside the limit and maintain that quota? It is one thing to try to use the Queen for a photo opportunity, but it is quite another to sell out the fishermen of Atlantic Canada in order not to upset the applecart in Bonn. What actions will the Minister take?

Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member, who has just risen in a state of high dudgeon—

An Hon. Member: Spurious indignation.

Mr. Fraser: Yes, it was indignation. It was justified indignation, except that it would be more helpful if members of the Opposition would put forward something constructive.

It is quite clear that unilaterally breaking our relations with the European Economic Community is not the answer to this problem. It would solve absolutely nothing. In fact, it would play into the hands of those particular German companies which are taking advantage of the situation. I would hope that Hon. Members would use some common sense and let us work this thing out.