ICNAF decision pleases Canada

The International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF) has concluded what may be its last annual meeting and Canadian authorities are pleased with the results, Minister of Fisheries, Roméo LeBlanc announced recently.

The ICNAF annual meeting held May 30 to June 6 in Bonn, West Germany, established regulations for international fisheries in the Grand Banks-Flemish Cap area beyond the Canadian 200-mile limit and provided a framework for consultations between Canada and ICNAF members on allocations set by Canada within the new zone. It may have been ICNAF's last annual meeting; its successor, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), should be established by the end of 1978.

On stocks outside or touching the 200-mile limit, Canadian harvesting requirements were met in all cases, providing significant increases for Canadian fishermen in 1979.

Negotiators established "reserves" on several important stocks that will be allocated later in the year by the Canadian Government, either to Canadian fishermen, if their requirements prove to be greater than present allocations, or to other states in return for economic and commercial benefits.

"This meeting represents a significant step forward for the Canadian fishing industry, and for the establishment of a new basis for international co-operation in the northwest Atlantic area," Mr. LeBlanc said. "The meeting provided quantifiable proof in fish, the only coinage that counts, that the states which fish off our Atlantic coast are prepared to co-operate with us and to meet our requirements regarding conservation and allocations in the area beyond the Canadian 200-mile limit. There is no doubt that this augurs well for the future – for the future relationships with these countries and for the future conservation of the fish stocks in the significant area off the Canadian Atlantic coast."

Highlights of the decisions on stocks outside and bordering the 200-mile zone are as follows:

- On the Flemish Cap, which is totally outside the 200-mile limit, the Canadian allocation of cod increased from 2,100 to 2,900 metric tons.
- The Canadian allocation from the Flemish Cap redfish stock increased from 4,400 to 5,500 metric tons.
- The Canadian allocation from the eastern Grand Bank redfish stock increased from 8,000 to 10,000 metric tons.
- The Canadian allocation of yellowtail flounder on the Grand Bank increased from 14,200 to 17,100 metric tons.
- The Canadian allocation of Greenland halibut off Labrador and Newfoundland increased from 15,710 to 20,000 metric tons.
- The Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for witch flounder on the southern Grand Bank was reduced as a conservation measure from 10,000 to 7,000 tons at Canada's request.

Significant increases

The Canadian allocation of all species on Flemish Cap increased by 24 per cent, from 7,000 to 8,660 metric tons. Of the increase in the TAC for this area from 60,000 to 62,000 metric tons, Canada received 83 per cent. In 1979, Canada will have 14 per cent of the TAC in the area.

The Canadian share of the five groundfish stocks on the Grand Bank which overlap the 200-mile limit (cod, redfish, plaice, witch, yellowtail) increased by 11 per cent, from 78,000 to 86,300 metric tons. Of the increase in TAC for these stocks from 103,000 to 115,000 metric tons, Canada received 69 per cent. In 1979, Canada will have 75 per cent of the TAC from these five overlapping groundfish stocks on the Grand Bank.

Canadian catches will increase markedly in several important stocks, such as cod in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence, haddock on the Scotian Shelf, and cod off Labrador and northeast Newfoundland.

Decisions regarding cod off Labrador and Newfoundland, capelin on the Grand Bank, and squid were deferred, to allow information from the 1978 fishing season to be analyzed fully.

In 1977, the first year of the new limit, Canada's share of the finfish species of main importance to the fishing industry – cod, haddock, pollock, redfish, plaice, witch, turbot, yellowtail, and herring – rose by 14 per cent to reach about 76 per cent of the total caught both within and outside the 200-mile zone. Canadian fishermen also take 100 per cent of the lobster, crab, and scallops in the zone.

For finfish of all species both within and outside the zone, including species such as silver hake and grenadier that the Canadian industry leaves aside in favour of more profitable fish, Canada's catch share rose in 1977 by 14 per cent to reach 58 per cent of the total.

Gross national product

Gross national product (GNP), seasonally adjusted at annual rates, increased 2.3 per cent in the first quarter of 1978 to a level of $222.3 billion; measured in real terms, GNP advanced 0.7 per cent. This real growth was the result of a further improvement in the balance of merchandise trade and renewed strength in personal expenditure and is a continuation of the pattern of fairly mild quarterly growth rates that the economy has exhibited since the first quarter of 1976. Prices rose by 1.6 per cent compared with an increase of 0.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1977, leaving prices in the first quarter of 1978 up 6.6 percent above their level of the first quarter of the previous year.

Gross fixed capital formation, which was a major contributor to the relatively slow growth of 1977, increased fractionally in the first quarter. With prices rising 2.4 per cent, the volume of fixed investment fell by 2.0 per cent as the result of significant drops in both government and business investment. This was the second consecutive quarterly decline in business investment and left real business capital formation at its lowest level in three years.

Merchandise trade

Exports of goods and services rose 4.8 per cent in the first quarter, while total imports were up 3.3 per cent, leading to a $728-million improvement in the balance. The increase of $792 million in real net exports was a notable source of growth. The improvement occurred entirely in the merchandise trade account as the non-merchandise deficit, particularly for travel, continued to increase.

The improvement in the merchandise trade surplus appears to have been partly the result of special circumstances in the U.S. economy and weak domestic demand in Canada rather than an improvement in Canada's competitive position. The increase in the current value of exports originated largely in crude and fabricated metals, coal, industrial ma-

(Continued on P. 8)