

*N.W. Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act*

Russian fleet primarily, the fleet from East Germany and the fleet from Poland, to name but a few, and these massive fleets are still taking all the herring they can catch.

I ask the minister, in what manner do we conserve the herring resources in the North Atlantic by limiting the catches of Canadians to herring for human consumption only when there has been absolutely no effort, so far as I know, to obtain agreement from the Europeans to take similar action? This is not conservation, it is only curtailment of Canadian fishing activities. Desirable as this is in order to maintain the fishery, it would appear that other action must be taken or else we are acting in vain, as has already been stated here. Apparently the International Commission for the North Atlantic Fisheries has not been capable of acting in time to take proper preventive measures. It does not act, it reacts after the various species are depleted.

It was mentioned a moment ago by the previous speaker that we face serious loss in the North Atlantic of our salmon resources. Here we have one country, namely Denmark, taking something like four million pounds of salmon a year on the high seas. I realize that efforts have been made to obtain international agreement on the curtailment of the catch of fish, the androgynous species, on the high seas. However, so far as I know, to date no agreement has been reached. So, the Danes are literally milking a cow which they neither own nor feed. We, as Canadians, make efforts to restock our salmon resources but in many cases the last we see of the salmon is when they go down Canadian rivers to the sea. They never come back. We must secure some type of agreement with other countries to prevent this from happening. To travel among Canadian fishermen today is to meet with a group of men who are somewhat frustrated and who are very concerned about their own future as well as the future of their industry in view of what is happening on our continental shelf.

Other countries are taking some action to extend their fisheries jurisdiction. Iceland, for example, which depends for some 90 per cent of its income on the fisheries, has taken action. The Icelandic parliament has introduced a resolution to implement fisheries jurisdiction over their entire continental shelf before November of 1972. When taking that stand they did so for a very definite reason. They wanted to set down their course and to make it clear to all and sundry that this is what they will present as a nation when they come before the 1973 Law of the Sea Conference. They look upon the continental shelf surrounding Iceland as being part and parcel of their country. They maintain that there would not be an Iceland without a continental shelf. I believe this logic could also apply to Canada. We certainly would not be a nation, a country, without our continental shelf. Certainly, a coastal state must have a prime interest in, and a primary concern with the fisheries surrounding its shores.

• (4:10 p.m.)

After all, Mr. Speaker, if you had a right to go to a bank and take out money any time you desired, you would look with disfavour on any action that would bar you from continuing that course of getting funds. Similarly, European countries do not look with favour on any legislation

[Mr. Crouse.]

which limits them from taking any quantity of fish they like off our banks, off our continental shelf. I am not saying that we should take over control of the continental shelf and ask all other fishing nations to stop fishing in that area, but I believe that we must take a stand. I believe we must extend Canadian fisheries jurisdiction out to the limit of our continental shelf.

To date our Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) has expressed concern. Our Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) has expressed concern. Some action has been taken towards establishing a 12-mile limit but today, Mr. Speaker, when you visit fishermen, in-shore fishermen and off-shore fishermen, they talk of the 12-mile limit almost in terms of it being a joke. There is very little fishing activity carried out within 12 miles of our shores. There has been so much over-fishing on our off-shore banks that the amount of fish that can be taken in our in-shore areas is very limited. This accounts for the frustration of our fishermen, and they keep asking their elected representatives "Can nothing be done"?

Some Latin American countries have extended their fishing jurisdictions 200 miles from their shores. Off the coast of Latin America this is very important because when they extend their fishing rights 200 miles from their shores they are covering the Humboldt current, which is one of the richest fishing currents in the world. They have done this in order to protect the fisheries for their own people. We in Canada must consider some type of fishing jurisdiction over our continental shelf if we are to survive as a fishing nation. I submit that we should no longer even consider fishing limits on a 12 miles scale. We should start considering depths, something like a 500 fathom area because this is the depth, or close to that depth, in which some of our deep-sea fishing trawlers are operating.

Now, returning to the bill, which I endorse, because even though it is not going to be too helpful we welcome any assistance that will be beneficial, I question the manner in which it will be enforced. I believe the minister stated that such legislation has been adopted by other countries, and that it will be acceptable to them. But to date, to name but one country, Russia has refused to have any examination made of fishing equipment below decks on its vessels. As I say, I question the manner in which this legislation will be enforced. Possibly the minister, when he winds up the debate, will enlighten us on the manner in which the regulations will be followed and enforced on ships operating on our continental shelf.

Only last Friday we learned of the over-all concern of the people in Atlantic Canada who are engaged in the fishing industry when representatives from Newfoundland, from Nova Scotia, from Prince Edward Island, from Quebec, from New Brunswick met in the West Block with the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp). They made a very good presentation, with a written and graphic brief, describing the over-all decline of the fisheries. Some of the figures which they presented to that meeting told a story of over-fishing, of complete disregard for the resources so far as other countries are concerned, a course which, if followed, within the next five years would bring about a total depletion of our over-all fishing resources.