



No. 296

November 29, 1989.

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IS REVIEWING ITS
POSITION ON QUOTAS

OTTAWA - International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie says there are indications that the European Economic Community (EC) is seriously reviewing its position with reference to quotas set by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).

Members of NAFO have a 60-day period in which to accept or reject the recommended quotas in each of the fisheries zones after they had been set by NAFO in September of this year. That 60-day period expires December 12. The EC abstained from voting on the NAFO quotas during NAFO's September meeting. Crosbie says that may be a signal that things are changing within the EC.

"We are advised by the European Community that their Fisheries Council meeting of Ministers that will deal with the questions of NAFO quotas will be held December 18th," said Crosbie. "At that meeting, they will decide what the position of the EC will be this year in connection with quotas established by NAFO."

Crosbie said Canada expects the European Community to submit notices of objection to all the relevant NAFO quotas at some point before December 12th.

"But they will do this only in order to keep this matter open for a decision at their meeting of December 18th," he said. "They will decide at this December 18th meeting, in fact, what their position is going to be for 1990 with reference to the quotas recommended by NAFO, whether they're going to accept quotas or reject them or agree to something in between or whatever their position is going to be."

"So, I think that we can gather from this that the European Community is seriously reviewing their position with reference to NAFO quotas," said Crosbie. "Last year the matter was not discussed at their meeting in December of their Fisheries Ministers at the Fisheries Council".

.../2

"It was just accepted that they reject all the NAFO quotas and set their own, and some cases, these were eight to 10 to 12 times higher than those allowed by NAFO," he said.

"Obviously, this year, after our campaign and the explanation of our point of view and our position, the matter is being looked at seriously by the European Community," he said.

Crosbie suggested that when the news comes out of Europe that the EC has objected to the NAFO quotas, Canadians should remember that the move is a procedural device to keep the issue open until the meeting of the Council of Fisheries Ministers on December 18.

For further information:

Paul Benoit
Press Secretary
Minister for International Trade
(613) 992-7332