

*Government Orders*

looking for those responsible for stock depletion when it is the government that is responsible for stock management.

Surely, the government cannot allow illegal fishing. But it must also take other action. It must concentrate first on restructuring the fishing industry, on developing new trading practices. It must emphasize all sorts of alternatives in order to put more than 50,000 people back to work in this country. Illegal fishing must be stopped, but the problem goes beyond that. In our view, this bill looks like another element of a broader smokescreen. We hope that our fears are unfounded.

Now, here are some tangible reservations we have about Bill C-8. The Criminal Code allows a peace officer to use force in order to arrest a person who wants to flee. We agree with this principle in the context of the Criminal Code. However, we consider this is a poor approach when it comes to fisheries. The situation in the fisheries industry is so precarious right now that the amendment could result in violent incidents. Let me explain.

In the past, using deterrent firing has not permitted to inspect foreign ships at fault. Therefore, once the bill is adopted, the protection officers may think they can use a degree of force greater than the one they are using now to achieve what they set out to do. As I said, the situation is precarious and using a greater degree of force to disable a foreign fishing vessel may encourage illegal fishermen to respond to the measures taken by Canada by arming to defend themselves. So, without being alarmist, we believe that the risk is real and should be considered by the minister.

Second, one of the objectives of Canada is to show the international community its determination to stop illegal practices.

This is a commendable objective. However, it entails the inherent risk to view force as the ultimate solution to the problem. We refuse to view force as an end in itself. Using force does not allow us to get to the root of the problem of illegal fishing. It is only a short-term solution. The real solution will come from concerted international action.

In fact, and here I come to our third concern, Canada will not be able to stop illegal fishing practices without the help of other countries. Negotiation efforts with the international community must be pursued. Even though we keep a close watch over the 200 mile area, if, for instance, fishing activities outside that area are allowed to go on and harm our fish stocks, the amendment to the Coastal Fisheries Protection Act will not solve the problem in any way. Canada cannot legislate in an international area. Therefore, negotiation is the only possible solution. We must not forget that when examining this amendment.

Other countries' input is all the more important since it is our firm belief that using force is only a temporary solution, one that we want to eliminate as soon as possible. Force is a short-term measure. We reject it on the whole but for purely dissuasive

purposes, we tolerate reasonable use of force, that is force aimed at disabling a fishing vessel without putting any human life at risk.

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Contrary to what the Criminal Code says, we do not tolerate using force likely to cause death in the case of fishing vessels. In our view, illegal fishermen are not criminals; often crewmen are not even aware of what is going on. We must understand that but since we must act rapidly, we are ready to accept it.

We take it that the bill applies exclusively to foreign ships because, in the case of Canadian vessels, there are alternatives to force which we cannot use in the case of foreign ones. In the case of Canadians, we could, for example, arrest identified offenders dockside or at home.

Therefore, through international treaties, the government should strive to have the countries involved implement arrest procedures similar to those we have on our territory. It would be the only efficient way to avoid using force and at the same time succeed in punishing those guilty of violating the law. We could avoid using force even in the case of offenses; through bilateral or multilateral agreements, we could have a ship captain arrested by the police of his own country. In such cases, if the fines were high enough, we could discourage smugglers without using any force.

While I am on the subject of international treaties, let me take this opportunity to talk about those that already exist, for example those with the United States and Quebec. I would like to give the House the following example, should Quebec ever become a foreign nation. Eighty per cent of resources found in the Gulf of St. Lawrence are already shared among the bordering provinces under an individual quota system.

This system is backed by a dockside monitoring program. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans is able to know, on a daily basis, what is being unloaded, where it is being unloaded, precisely at which dock, and by whom. Therefore, should Quebec choose sovereignty, contrary to what some of my colleagues claimed last time I rose in this House, we would not be locked into endless constitutional arguments; on the contrary, the work has already been done.

Resource sharing agreements are already in place. In the worst case scenario, the colour of the paper might change but the basis is already there. So, whether Quebec is a neighbour or a foreign state, using force, under international agreements, might not be necessary, or so I hope.

There are alternatives to using force. I would like to give other examples. Apparently, as we approach the year 2000, a satellite orbiting around the earth can read a newspaper over my shoulder. How can it be then that we are unable to keep up with new technology and track any vessel in our waters? We could increase security at sea and better protect our sovereignty on the