

As well:

III The Committee recommends that the government continue discussions with the United States with a view to finally resolving the dispute over the Northwest Passage in accordance with Canadian claims. The government should examine the possibility of unilaterally obtaining an International Court of Justice ruling on Canadian sovereignty over the Passage.

E. Non-Military Threats:

With respect to “non-military” sovereignty threats, Committee Members showed particular concern over problems relating to the protection of our fisheries, drug interdiction, marine pollution and how we can best effect appropriate responses. In relation to the question of illegal fishing, by virtue of the Law of the Sea Convention, Canada sets catch quotas for domestic and foreign fleets fishing in Canadian waters. Canadian authorities can also enforce Canadian laws relating to environmental protection, the exploitation of seabed minerals and oceanic research. However, the Law of the Sea Convention is mute on the subject of authority beyond the 200-mile limit. High seas fishing restrictions depend only on the goodwill of the countries involved in regional fisheries management organizations such as the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), to which Canada belongs.

According to Victor Rabinovitch, Assistant Deputy Minister, International Affairs, Department of Fisheries and Oceans:

The major part of what we would call “illegal” fishing takes place outside the 200-mile zone and therefore in international waters, but it is fishing that is contrary to international management rules adopted by the relevant organizations.⁽¹⁷⁾

In the Pacific, in the past several years the serious implications of large-scale driftnet fishing have become increasingly apparent. Driftnet fishing, which involves the use of huge gillnets, which entangle both target and non-target fish species, mammals and seabirds, continues to be practiced by a number of Pacific nations. Canada is directly affected by this practice due to the harvesting of salmon of Canadian origin and has broader environmental concerns about the practice. It has supported the international campaign against large-scale driftnet fishing.

NAFO, which in theory manages the Northwest Atlantic fishery, the world’s richest, is responsible for establishing catch levels for all members. However, several countries ignore NAFO quotas. The main problem is the management of the straddling stocks on the Grand

⁽¹⁷⁾ Proceedings, 11:30.