

Following for Embassy Paris: Please speak to French officials along lines similar to foregoing, except that we are not repeat not at this time requesting France's support for a new UN conference on the Law of the Sea. In paragraph 6 substitute "French fishermen" for "USA fishermen" and "French Government" for "USA Government" etc. as required. Following for London only: Please transmit information to UK officials for their information.

[H.C.] GREEN

749.

J.G.D./MG01/XII/F/293

*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis  
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Ambassador in United States  
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 672

Washington, March 1, 1963

SECRET. CANADIAN EYES ONLY. OPIMMEDIATE.

Reference: Our Tel 652 Feb 28.†

Repeat for Information: London, Paris (Priority). DND Ottawa (JAG and DNPO) from Ottawa.

LAW OF THE SEA

Alexis Johnson Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs asked me to come in this afternoon to receive initial reaction to the Canadian decisions in your telegram L-30 February 26. He had with him Yingling Assistant Legal Adviser for Special Functional Problems (which includes Law of Sea questions), Taylor Deputy to Harrington Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Fisheries and Wildlife and Hubbard of the Canadian Desk.

2. At the end of our discussions Johnson summed up the State Department reaction by saying that our informing the State Department of the Canadian decisions was appreciated; but that it was earnestly requested that the decisions be reconsidered since they could not repeat not be helpful to our relations at the present time. He also emphasized that USA officials would be more than happy to enter into discussions with Canadian authorities on all aspects of the Canadian position. He and his advisers also raised several specific questions about details of the Canadian position.

3. To start off the discussion Johnson said that as we well knew both USA and Canada were facing increasing pressure from our fisheries interests in respect of the Japanese pressure for opening up halibut fishing areas on the West Coast. If action were taken by Canada at the present time to close off further substantial areas of the sea that were of interest to USA West Coast fishing industries then this would create a very difficult problem for USA Administration. USA fishery interests were influential and would probably suggest retaliation of some kind against Canada in respect of such action. Johnson was unsure of what form of retaliation they might propose although he supposed it might be to restrict Canadian access to markets in USA.

4. Johnson went on to express regret at the Canadian decision when the West Coast fisheries had so long been a model of joint USA-Canadian cooperation in the development of fisheries resources. Furthermore we were both facing the imminent termination of the first period of the Northwest Pacific Fisheries Convention and it was felt that our mutual cooperation and our joint cooperation with the Japanese would be jeopardized by the Canadian decisions.