

I may say that this is not a point in respect of which I consider any major emphasis should be made. In other words, as far as the 12 mile zone is concerned, if the government brought back a proposal, as it is contained in the present bill, we would not make any major issue of it, but I do suggest that the argument or objections raised by Mr. Basford are really not well founded in fact.

It seems to me that the only real area for discussion, in light of what has taken place, is in respect of the principle which Mr. Mather has mentioned, and which Mr. MacLean has touched upon, regarding the question of whether parliament itself should be the body which should establish and fix the baselines and co-ordinates after they have been established. I think this is an important matter and is perhaps the sort of consideration that should be in the minds of the members of the committee rather than any idea of raising a smokescreen in respect of technical problems in providing legislation which, I submit, should be dealt with very expeditiously after the committee adopts its report.

Mr. STEWART: Mr. Chairman, it was suggested earlier by Mr. Mather that there was a great deal of concern on the Canadian west coast in respect of the present bill. I must say that if that concern does exist there it was not made very evident in the proceedings of this committee. We had at least one witness from that part of Canada who tended to be opposed to the present bill, but I think an examination of what was said then would not lead one to believe that there was any very massive and precise opposition in respect of specific points. There was a general negative attitude expressed toward this legislation. If there is the kind of concern, about which Mr. Mather speaks, it is concern perhaps as a result of confusion rather than precision.

I should like to continue my remarks in respect of what is quite evidently the principal point of the motion, namely that all negotiations be concluded before any attempt is made to specify in law the baselines.

As Mr. MacLean has intimated, there is something to be said for a procedure which would conclude it with a statutory statement in respect of the baselines. However, there is much to be said on the other side of the situation.

Mr. MacLean weighs the considerations carefully and states he would like to see this done in the other way but he is prepared to settle for this bill. In my case I weigh the considerations and end up just a little stronger on the side of the proposal suggested by the bill. I do not see how we can very well conduct successful negotiations without the government having the kind of mandate it is seeking. I think that the procedure being followed now, while perhaps it is not as neat as one which would be terminated by a statutory act in respect of the baselines, is the best that can be obtained in the world of practice in which we must live.

Mr. Barnett has stated that if we accept this motion we will not be killing the present scheme of legislation. I think all of those who are familiar with the workings of our legislature will tend to disagree with him in that regard. The government has brought forth a bill. It has supported that bill and is trying to explain it, not to the satisfaction of all concerned, but as well as possible. I do not think there is any doubt in anyone's mind, certainly not in my own, that if this motion is accepted its effect will be to kill the present bill and will knock on the head the whole notion for which we have been striving for many years under one government or another. I do not know whether that is what Mr. Barnett has in mind, and I suspect it is not, but the consequence of accepting his motion will mean the killing of this bill and, Mr. Chairman, therefore his motion must be defeated.

Mr. BARNETT: I made it very clear that that was not the idea I had in mind.