

this question and I hope someone on the government benches can answer it.

This, then, is our attitude on this legislation. We fully approve the principle of the bill. We hope that its implementation will not require six more years. If it does, our fisheries resources will be completely destroyed by the overfishing of foreign fishing fleets.

Mr. Louis-Roland Comeau (South Western Nova): Mr. Speaker, I did not speak on second reading so there are a few things I should like to say with respect to Bill C-203. I say at the outset that I concur with the remarks of the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse) on second and third reading. Through him and through others our party has been, for many years, advocating a measure such as this. However, I doubt we would have gone about it in this way. We would probably have tried what we tried in 1960, when we failed by only one vote to reach agreement on proposals such as this. I think this is probably the attitude that we should have taken, without saying unilaterally that we declare this to be our territorial zone.

When we study legislation such as this, Mr. Speaker, we realize how effective we need to be in the Department of External Affairs. The hon. member for South Shore touched on this matter. Many nations are concerned about what we are trying to do here. We cannot afford to irritate any of them, because if we do we will have worse wheat sales and more export problems with textiles and oil. I understand that even tonight the United States has signed an agreement with Venezuela for oil. We will continue to have problems in many other sectors of our economy which are suffering, such as the electronics and footwear industries.

With this type of legislation we have to be very careful. We have to decide the course of action through international agreement. I agree that the areas we are trying to declare as belonging to us should belong to us, but I fail to see why this question has not been brought to the attention of any Law of the Sea conference in order to obtain agreement. If there is trouble with our economy today, the responsibility lies very heavily with the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp). We must have agreements with other countries on matters such as this.

The enforcement of this new act concerns me, Mr. Speaker. In a letter dated May 5, Mr. Gordon O'Brien, manager of the Fisheries

Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act
Council of Canada, wrote to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry as follows:

The amendments to the Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act have our support. We have been advocating some such action ever since the bill was passed in 1964 and are pleased to see the present degree of determination to take action—

● (9:40 p.m.)

I am pleased to see the government's determination to take action. If one is to judge from the statement the Secretary of State for External Affairs made to the Fisheries Committee, this bill will merely give the Governor in Council power to make regulations, a power that has existed since 1964. Apparently, the 12-mile limit has been in force since 1964. I point out that the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis) said, as reported at page 412 of *Hansard* of November 3, 1969:

Those of you who are familiar with fisheries matters know that we have a 12-mile limit. We have had a 12-mile exclusive fishing zone ever since 1964... Not only that, but we have a 12-mile limit extending seaward from the headland to headland lines, or baselines, which we have already published on our fisheries maps for all to see.

If the 12-mile limit has been in force since 1964, what is the purpose of this legislation? On April 17, 1970, as reported at page 6013 of *Hansard*, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said in part:

I mentioned yesterday that we decided in 1964 that it was necessary to do it alone, and so we did, we passed the Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act laying down the legislative basis for delimiting the territorial sea from straight baselines rather than from the sinuosities of the coast, and established a 9-mile fishing zone contiguous to our 3-mile territorial sea.

But we have not enforced this legislation which has been on our statute books since 1964. That legislation has not been effective. I have talked to my colleagues who were here at the time and who have followed this matter with interest, and they say it has not been effective in preserving our fisheries resources. I agree. If this bill merely does what the previous bill did, it will not be effective. If it will not protect and preserve our fisheries resources, particularly those within the 12-mile limit, it is useless giving this bill third reading. The problem of enforcement is a serious one.

As has been said this evening, the ships of seven nations, namely, Britain, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, France, Spain and Italy have fished in Canadian waters on grounds of historic and traditional rights. Although the ships of these nations have been permitted to