

Fisheries Commission Recommendation

matter which should have been brought to a conclusion by the previous administration. I would not quarrel with them too much if they were to suggest that there was some unnecessary delay under the previous government. I asked for the production of papers earlier, including the correspondence exchanged between the government of Canada and the international north Pacific fisheries commission on this subject. A return was made on July 5, 1963 and it is sessional paper No. 64A.

The file on this subject begins with a letter dated November 23, 1962 addressed to the then secretary of state for external affairs, the Hon. Howard C. Green, wherein the government is notified by the executive director of the international north Pacific fisheries commission that certain recommendations of the commission to change the annex to the treaty had been made. The correspondence has some rather wide gaps in it, and I will not attempt to put it all on the record because I do not think it is particularly relevant to this discussion. However, I would follow through to the fact that on April 4, 1963, a letter was addressed to Mr. Jackson, the executive director, from the under secretary of state for external affairs acknowledging the fact that they had been notified by the international commission of the acceptance by the government of the United States of the amendments to the annex to the convention.

Then there is a lapse of some period of time, the next letter on file being dated May 8, 1963, addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) from Mr. Jackson, the executive director of the commission. In the fourth paragraph of the letter Mr. Jackson has this to say:

The commission has now been advised that the government of Canada has accepted the recommendations to amend the annex of the convention in respect of the stocks referred to in the letters cited above. Advice from the government of Canada to this effect was received by the commission on May 8, 1963. In accordance with the provisions of article VII, paragraph 2, of the convention I am herewith notifying each contracting party of the date of receipt of the Canadian notification of acceptance of the amendments to the annex of the convention.

Since all three contracting parties have now signified their approval of the commission's recommendations of the amendment of the annex, it is considered amended from May 8, 1963 in accordance with the provisions of article VII, paragraph 1, of the convention.

In light of that particular letter, and in light of the fact that the effective date of the amendments to the treaty is May 8, 1963, I find the next document on file to be quite interesting. It is dated May 10, 1963 and is from the Secretary of State for External

Affairs to the executive director of the convention. This document is a telegram and it reads as follows:

With further reference to your letters of November 26, 1962, January 25, 1963 and February 19, 1963, I am pleased to inform you that the commission's recommendation for the removal of the halibut stocks in the eastern Bering sea and the herring stocks west of—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): Order. I am listening with some care to the line of argument the hon. member is adopting. In his previous remarks the hon. member indicated that he has knowledge of the narrow limits between which a debate of this kind is confined. He is now requesting the production of papers, and the only matter before this house at the moment is not the operation of the commission but whether or not the documents referred to should or should not be tabled. I recognize that in this chamber there has not been a long history of this particular type of procedure, but in every case since this rule was adopted on September 27, 1963 I think every Speaker has warned the house of the narrow limits of this debate. While I can understand that the hon. member would want to preface his remarks with some information, I would advise him that the real question before the house is whether or not the documents should be tabled. I would hope that he would keep within these limits as far as possible. I say this to the hon. member because I would not want him to range far afield and then this practice be used as a precedent for succeeding debates.

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your concern in this connection. I stated at the outset that I would carefully try to avoid arguing the merits or demerits of the case. I am about to conclude my reference to documents which, in my opinion, are in fact the basis of my contention that this house should request the government to produce a cabinet minute, which I am willing to concede is not a usual request. It is because of the actual documents and the factual statements which I am attempting to put on the record that I feel I have a logical argument. If you will bear with me for another minute or two, Mr. Speaker, I think I can proceed immediately to relate what I am quoting to my request for the production of the documents. I feel these questions are very pertinent to my case. I realize that they are rather wordy because they go into the details, but I felt I should be careful in placing the exact text of these documents on the record so that there could be no question as to the accuracy of the arguments I am going to advance.

[Mr. Barnett.]