

"As soon as the Canadian Government learned about this incident, we informed the French authorities not only that we considered that the creation of zones of security, for the purpose of nuclear tests, was an abuse of the freedom of the high seas, but also that we regarded the actions of the French seamen in boarding the ship in international waters, subduing the crew and removing it by force, as being a clear violation of international law."

After referring to consular assistance provided to Mr. McTaggart, Mr. Sharp added:

"We fully support and endorse Mr. McTaggart's claim. If the information which we are in the process of collecting from the 'Greenpeace' crew, together with that which we expect to receive in due course from the French authorities should, in our opinion, justify formal espousal of his claim, which would thus be raised to the Government-to-Government level, the Canadian Government would be quite prepared to do this. I believe, however, that until we have received all the depositions from the crew and until the French authorities have had an opportunity to respond to our formal request for an investigation, this would be premature."

On April 5, 1974, Mr. Sharp stated in the House of Commons that the Canadian Ambassador in Paris had been instructed to make further representations to the appropriate French authorities with a view to attempting once again to settle Mr. McTaggart's claims arising out of both the 1972 collision between the Greenpeace and a French naval vessel and the 1973 boarding and seizure of the Greenpeace by French naval personnel and the subsequent injury caused to its skipper. Mr. Sharp added that, should discussions between representatives of the French and Canadian Governments fail to materialize or fail to bring about a reasonable settlement, the Canadian Government would then, subject to Mr. McTaggart's wishes, formally espouse the claims in respect of both incidents.