

Canada and their phasing out period has been agreed upon. We are waiting to complete negotiations so that we can enforce these phasing out periods.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Was the agreement which was tentatively entered into by some of these countries conditional on all the countries agreeing?

Mr. ROBICHAUD: In accordance with international practice, if one of those countries, not naming anyone says, "all right you go ahead and establish your co-ordinates, you close your bodies of water but if you do it, we will take you before the international court", then our agreement with the others may not be valid any more, it may have no value.

Mr. CROUSE: One further question, Mr. Chairman. Were the Minister and the government not aware of these rights when they made this unilateral declaration?

Mr. ROBICHAUD: Definitely, and this is why we are negotiating. This is why we are trying to convince those countries who are objecting. We are trying to convince them of our rights.

Mr. HOWARD: I understood the Minister and also the Secretary of State for External Affairs had stated quite clearly and definitely, when Bill S-17 was being considered—and they used the remarks of the Prime Minister in his talks with the President of the United States—that we would do nothing, either by way of negotiating a phasing out period or anything else, to upset the United States claim of an historic fishery within what was then proposed to be the 12-mile fishing zone in so far as the west coast is concerned. Is that still the position?

Mr. ROBICHAUD: Yes. I am trying to get the exact words said then. It was stated then that we would respect the historic rights claimed by the United States where we felt those rights existed. There may be areas where they may claim rights. We have had the experience with some countries, where they have claimed certain rights but we were able to prove to them that they did not have such rights in those certain areas.

Mr. HOWARD: You are talking about the United States fisheries out on the west coast?

Mr. ROBICHAUD: There is on the west coast quite a large area; there are different bodies of waters involved, I could mention Dickson entrance, Hecate Strait, Queen Charlotte Sound. I will give you an example, without getting into detail. The situation, say, in Hecate Strait is altogether different than that of Queen Charlotte Sound on account of the distance separating the co-ordinates if based from headland to headland.

Mr. HOWARD: We have not got any co-ordinates yet.

Mr. ROBICHAUD: We have to base our negotiations on co-ordinates.

Mr. HOWARD: Let me get back to the question. Are you negotiating with the United States for it to phase out its claim of an historic fishing right on the west coast within the 12-mile fishing zone?

Mr. ROBICHAUD: This is a detail which I am sorry I cannot answer at this stage.