

Canadian fishing vessel the "Maritimer" was arrested by the French authorities on charges of fishing without a license within the 12 mile territorial sea of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. This arrest was clearly in retaliation for the arrest of the "Croix de Lorraine". However, the two cases are sharply distinguishable. In the "Croix de Lorraine" case there was a deliberate flouting of Canadian law for political reasons by Saint-Pierre and Miquelon politicians, whereas in the "Maritimer" case the French suddenly decided to enforce their fisheries law for the first time against a small coastal fishing vessel, which had fished there for some years without harassment. While the Captain of the "Maritimer" was found guilty on the charges by the Court in St-Pierre no penalty was imposed, since he had been unaware of the French fishery regulations and the requirement to have a license. The French, in suddenly and unexpectedly enforcing their regulations, had ignored their undertaking not to do so without further consultation with Canada. As a result of Canada's strong protests, France suspended the enforcement of their regulations for 90 days. The preliminary inquiry into the charges against those persons arrested on the "Croix de Lorraine" will proceed in October.