

Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act

find the money to continue receiving the price they have been receiving for fish up until this time. When they sold \$1 worth of fish to the United States they got \$1.08 back. Today they can no longer depend on this extra bounty. In fact, they have no idea what they are going to get in view of the action of the government, because the dollar one day is floating close to parity and another day it is down to 96 cents. These are some of the problems which they face on the east coast. They are not only monetary problems but problems with respect to the destruction of fishing resources brought about by the inaction of the government ever since 1964.

We in the official opposition must question this statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. We do not deny that there has been a reciprocal fishing agreement arranged with the United States which is acceptable to Canada, but in light of the facts revealed in the committee, where the bill received a searching analysis, we learned that Canada and France may end up by going to the International Court of Justice on the question of rights over the continental shelf south of Newfoundland. We also learned that negotiations with France over boundary lines between St. Pierre and Miquelon are deadlocked. This also applies to the negotiations over fishing rights off our coast, especially in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Here we have the strange situation, and I emphasize the word strange, where French nationals can fish in waters from which Canadian deep sea fishermen are excluded. This is not our only problem. In the standing committee we heard from Mr. Beesley, head of the legal division of the External Affairs Department, who said:

It may be we will have to go to the International Court or to some form of third-party settlement. But at the present time neither side wants to approach the matter that way.

The possession of the shelf area is liable to grow in importance if oil is discovered in the area, because sovereign rights include jurisdiction over its natural resources.

He said that the distance between the Newfoundland mainland and St. Pierre was 14 nautical miles but the distance between Little Green Island and the French colony was only three miles. Canada's view was that a median line should be drawn between these outposts, which would put the boundary $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the French islands. But the French have maintained since 1907 that the boundary should be mid-channel between their islands and Newfoundland, which would give no ter-

ritorial sea at all to either Little Island or Big Green Island. Do we have any claims there, Mr. Speaker? In 1908 a lighthouse was built on Big Green Island and today it sports not only that building but a flock of sheep and an RCMP man on watch for smugglers.

Mr. Beesley also told the committee that the differences of view on the sea level boundary was "a friendly disagreement and we are still hopeful we can solve it." That was some weeks ago. Those kind of friends we can do without, as my colleague from St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has just stated. We have heard nothing to date from the Secretary of State for External Affairs on this important matter. We have heard nothing about any agreements he may have reached with France during the course of his negotiations on this problem. Surely he must be aware of the depletion of our fisheries resources on the Atlantic coast.

We in the official opposition have been doing everything humanly possible to bring these facts to the attention of the government. Surely we are entitled to a response as to the position being taken by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) on this matter. What progress are they making? They are as silent as the harp on Tara's walls. We hear nothing from them day in and day out.

There is also the question of drilling for oil in that area. Who owns that resource? Will it belong to France? Will it belong to Canada? If pollution occurs from a well that is improperly drilled, will we be forced to pay the bill? Will we provide the livelihood for thousands of fishermen when they must come hand in hand in order to get something to pay the week's grocery bill, or will France look after this for us? There are questions that must be answered. They cannot be left hanging day after day, week after week, month after month.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I say to the government that it is obvious that in the interests of conservation of our fisheries resources and in the interests of pollution control the Canadian government should urge and promote the calling of an international conference, if you will, a third Law of the Sea Conference, in an effort to reach agreement on these thorny international problems. Negotiations with France are not the only ones that are ending in deadlock. When this bill came up for second reading I asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether Portugal was not also one of the nations