

*Government Organization*

answers which added up to nothing except perhaps that sometimes he was engaging in negotiations with the United States. We got answers from Mr. Robichaud, who was the minister of fisheries at that time to the effect he really did not have much to do with it because the matter came under the Department of External Affairs. He would always bow to Mr. Martin.

● (9:40 p.m.)

In those years, one thing was obvious. It was that the government took no action. In retrospect I think I can assert that it intended to take no action. That is the logical conclusion. One of the most ridiculous aspects of it then was the fact that here the Parliament of Canada had passed a law giving Canada the right to draw straight baselines by order in council, while on the other hand the Government of Canada was engaged in negotiating the position of those baselines with a foreign country. In other words, the government went to the government of the United States to ask: Where would you like us to put these baselines? Presumably, this is still the situation. As a consequence, almost five years later we still do not have any straight baselines on the Pacific coast, at least. Yet an absolute guarantee was given us by the government of the day in 1964 that these straight baselines would be in effect on the basis referred to by the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin, namely, from the northern end of Vancouver island to the southern end of the Queen Charlotte's.

The former prime minister, Mr. Pearson, said they would be in effect by the end of 1964. Well, 1964 came and went, and we had no baselines. The year 1965 came and went, and still we had no baselines. It is like a broken record. And even today no baselines have been drawn. The hon. member for Coast Chilcotin points out in extremely lucid language what is likely to happen to us if we continue much longer to procrastinate in drawing these baselines, one, where it was promised they should be drawn and, two where they should logically be drawn. In this situation a government promise and common sense happened to coincide. An hon. friend behind me says it might be done in time for the by-election. Mr. Chairman, I don't care when they do it, as long as they do it quickly. If the effect is favourable from the point of view of the government in the riding of Comox-Alberni, that will be all right, too. But something has to be done about it soon, because as every day passes foreign nations are putting themselves in a position where

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

they can claim historic fishing rights in what would otherwise be Canadian waters.

We had enough of that when Mr. Pearson was prime minister, after the announcement was made that Canada intended to institute a 12-mile limit. The first thing the former prime minister said to the President of the United States was: Don't worry about it, because we shall guarantee that your historic fishing rights off the west coast will not be disturbed; we shall give in on this before we begin to do anything. This sort of thing is typical of the Liberal party and the Liberal government as far as our relations with the United States are concerned.

The other day a Japanese long liner was arrested for fishing within the 12-mile limit we now have, the one which follows the sinuosities of the coastline. Instances have been reported on a number of occasions on which fishing boats of the soviet Union have been observed fishing within area which would today be Canadian waters had the government of the day drawn the baselines where it promised to draw them. But all this has been ignored so far.

There is an item in the current edition of the *Pacific Troller* in which a west coast skipper, Gary Cadorin, describes an encounter with one of the vessels. He writes in precise detail, giving the geographic co-ordinates of his position, the weather conditions, the depth and other factors at the time. He tells how he was caught up in the net of a Russian side trawler, SRTM 8-461 of the Mayak class, 178 feet in length, and gives a lengthy description of what he saw. Other fishermen have had similar experiences. I asked the minister about this early in the session—on October 8, as a matter of fact. I asked him when it was intended to move along the lines I have just been advocating. Let me quote, in part, from his reply. I must say that those who have congratulated the minister on being articulate, on his precision of language and on his ability to say what he means ought to look closely at this statement. The hon. gentleman glossed over the whole issue completely and ignored the whole principle by saying, for example, that there had been no fishing by Russian fishing vessels within Canadian fishing zones.

That is probably quite true. But in my original question and in the presentation I made later on the subject I never claimed there had been. The minister says that by Canadian fishing areas he means areas within