

Phasing Out Foreign Fishing Operations

We announced the decision to draw these closing lines in December, 1970. The 60-day waiting period expired on February 26, 1971. The earliest date for their publication in Part II of the *Canada Gazette* is March 10, 1971. They will therefore come into effect on Wednesday of next week. From that date on no nation can establish a new fishery inside Canada's exclusive fishing zones. Nor can it step up its fishing activity from that which it has conducted, traditionally, in what from now on will be our exclusive Canadian fishing waters.

So much for new entrants and new foreign fishing activities, but there is still the matter of phasing out. By phasing out I mean the phasing out of traditional fishing practices by the following countries, namely, France, Spain, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Denmark and Norway. No other countries will be able to fish in our exclusive fishing zones in the future.

It should come as no surprise to Canadians, and certainly it will come as no surprise to Newfoundlanders, that these countries have, traditionally, fished close to our shores. Many of them have been fishing close to our shores for more than 400 years!

Against this background it should not come as any surprise either to hear that it will take several years to complete the phasing out process. It will be a negotiated process. It will be a process which will be completed in the mid-1970s. Then the closest which foreign nations will be able to come to our shores is 12 miles from certain major promontories along our coasts.

In answer to a question in the House last week, Mr. Speaker, I said that we would be asking foreign fishing vessels to move out 12 miles. We have now asked Spain, Portugal, Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom to move out 12 miles from our shore along certain sections of our coast and in certain seasons of the year. We are asking them to do this right away, wherever and whenever there is likely to be a gear conflict. France is a special case. The several hundred year old French treaty provides as follows:

Notice of any fresh laws or regulations shall be given to the government of the French Republic three months before they come into operation.

This notice will be given by March 10, the time at which the ordinance describing our fisheries closing lines are published in Part II of the *Canada Gazette*.

I have used the term "gear conflict", Mr. Speaker. By that I mean the danger of large foreign fishing vessels interfering seriously with the local operations of our small vessel, inshore fishing fleets. The authority to take action, Mr. Speaker, stems from an amendment which we made to the federal Fisheries Act last year. This amendment extended to Newfoundland, a provision which had applied to the Maritime provinces for some time. Now large Canadian trawlers over 65 feet in length must stay out 12 miles from shore. They must stay out 12 miles unless they are given specific permission, by the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry, to fish closer to our Canadian coastline.

[Mr. Davis.]

• (11:50 a.m.)

I intend to use this discretionary power, Mr. Speaker, without discrimination as to nationality. I intend to use it in our dealings with Canadian trawlers and foreign-owned trawlers alike. Countries which have traditionally fished up to the three-mile limit off Newfoundland have been put on notice in this connection. In future, they too will have to stay out at least 12 miles from shore whenever and whenever there is any danger of a gear conflict in the area. We will map out these areas in advance and let them know where they can come into the three-mile limit and where they cannot, pending the completion of our over-all phasing out process.

Hon. members opposite say they are confused. They should not be. Those who come from Newfoundland know far better than I do that foreign fishing vessels have come close to our shores for hundreds of years. They have known all along about the necessity to give notice. They have known about the phasing out process. To tell local fishermen that they can take the law into their own hands and drive foreign fishing vessels out 12 miles is, therefore, an irresponsible act.

We are phasing them out over the next few years. We are phasing them out for all time. We are also using a recent change in the federal Fisheries Act to eliminate gear conflicts between large vessels and small inshore vessels during this relatively short phasing out period.

This is the orderly way of doing things. It is also the best way. It is the best way especially when we are counting on many of these countries to support our case at the next Law of the Sea Conference in 1973. In effect we will be asking them to join us in our attempt to cut down on big fleet operations, including that of the U.S.S.R., 50 to 100 miles from our shores.

We will need all the allies we can get in this much bigger struggle to conserve the fish stocks in the north Atlantic. An abrupt and unilateral act on our part in respect of this matter of phasing our foreign fishermen from our Canadian exclusive fishing zones would, I suggest, be very shortsighted indeed.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, firstly I should like to offer my personal congratulations to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his young bride. I look forward to seeing him back in the House relaxed and refreshed, and I also look forward to a renaissance of closer personal inter-relationships among all members of the House. I can understand some of the pangs of the recent decision-making process.

I thank the minister for his statement, a copy of which I received when I came into the House at eleven o'clock. I should like to make two brief points. First of all, the east coast fishery has two main problems. The first is the general problem of overfishing by many foreign vessels. The second is the specific problem of the infiltration of these nations up to our shores inside our territorial waters and three-mile limit, indeed, right up to our coasts and into our backyards.