

*Supply*

Perhaps to the credit of the Government, which is not something that we do all the time, cutting back on the fishing rights to which the Minister referred in responding to questions from my colleague, the Hon. Member for Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands (Mr. Manly), actually begins to focus the issue. To cut back on the right to fish for French fishermen, and to make the failure of the agreement on boundaries as costly as possible for the French, is surely the only way to go. When the Government took those steps in reaction to the fire-storm of protest that came last year from the people of Newfoundland, and calls here in the House in Question Period for days, that action was certainly on the right track. I am very pleased to hear that far fewer trawlers are coming over.

This is a question of the fishery of Metropolitan France which has often extended incredibly far across the oceans. While Metropolitan France is not doing its thing in the Gulf area and around Newfoundland as it has in the past, and thank goodness for that, that is the type of action that is required. In this context, perhaps it is the desperation of the French that has been expressed in actions over the last several weeks, for example, the action on April 15, of the *Croix de Lorraine*—a good historic name. Perhaps it is worth remembering President de Gaulle from Lorraine and the *Croix de Lorraine* which is part of his symbolism. It is a marvellous name to have on a ship, and a marvellous expression of French grandeur—if it does not have power, throw some muscle around a little bit any way. When that ship sails into the area with politicians on board and the media present, it creates an incident and attempts to dramatize the matter.

We should perhaps recognize in that action an indication of the desperation of the French as they find themselves under severe pressure, and find themselves getting caught. Are those the circumstances in which the Government of Canada should be giving anything away? I think not.

Let us look at the agreement that the Government came to, which was announced on April 28. The Secretary of State for External Affairs the Minister for International Trade, and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, all three of them, announced that agreement had been reached on a non-binding mediation procedure to assist in resolving the Canada-France fishing quotas dispute.

What is this about “non-binding mediation”? It is just about as bad as precedents that one cannot use, or agreements that do not amount to precedents. That is not what is wanted when the pressure is on the French. What is wanted is no fishing, or as little fishing as can possibly be allowed to the French until they recognize that this matter has to be resolved by arbitration and they are only going to get rights established through an arbitration process. The event yesterday adds insult to the injury of the April 28 agreement, where a French naval tug dragged a fishing boat, by means of a cable fastened to the bow of the fishing boat, into harbour in the French islands.

That additional act, which has produced the outrage in this resolution, only underscores the need for strong action. As I

scan over the agreement I notice that there has to be agreement on a mediator by tomorrow, May 7. These are circumstances in which this particular announcement and the agreement should be torn up. These are circumstances in which to send the French back and say to them, “You can go and talk to Prime Minister Chirac”, who is preoccupied with becoming president these days, a position he will likely not achieve on Sunday. “You go back and talk serious business”.

We were all interested to note this morning in our news that the French people, at least Parisians who are at the heart of Metropolitan France in the capital city, have not been told about this matter. I bet the Chamber of Commerce or the fisheries in St. Malo know all about it. I wonder how many votes Prime Minister Chirac is hoping to get up and down the west coast. If some of the reporters took themselves out there and did a little checking, I am sure that everyone up and down the coast knows what is happening with this particular piece of tugboat diplomacy by Prime Minister Chirac, or as someone stated earlier, this particular “Chirac attack” that we have had off the coast of Newfoundland.

What is required is decisive and clear-headed action. We have had a little, but not nearly enough from the Government of Canada. We want a lot more. Let us keep the French out of the fishery as much as we possibly can, under the laws that exist, and get them into the arbitration that is required to settle the boundary dispute. Once that is resolved, and once we have the type of international decision, which we expect will be to the advantage of the fishermen of Canada while allowing some rights which have existed in European history, one is tempted to say, from time immemorial, that the French do some fishing here, once we have established how much of a right France has in this type of context, we will have an end to the difficulties that the French have been imposing, not so much on the Canadian people here, but on individual fishermen.

I have not said very much about those men who were fishing where they have fished for a long time, where the fishermen of St. Pierre and Miquelon and Newfoundland have fished together without dispute, and now to have the metropolitan power intrude as it has through the French Navy is entirely unacceptable. The Government of Canada is on its mettle to resolve this as fast as it can.

**Mr. Siddon:** I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp) a couple of questions. I appreciate the seriousness and the particular perspective on history which he brings to this issue. I am sure he is far more qualified than many other Members in the House to deal in questions of history. In view of his appreciation of history, he will realize that difficult international diplomatic problems are rarely solved in a fortnight or in a year, and sometimes even in a decade or more. I appreciate the fact that he has recognized some progress has been made.

If we look at the 1972 treaty, it is true that the treaty recognizes that historical presence going back centuries