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with those applied by the coastal state within its exclusive economic zone.

We have put forward a sensible solution to this problem. We have had it backed by X number of countries, but it was stopped because the European Community and other stubborn countries with a huge amount of clout and economic power now no longer want to be neighbours or neighbourly or worry about the rest of humanity, and who are now one of the largest economic power aggregations in the world. They are not concerned about what Canada might or might not like or what humanity thinks.

We have done all of this but we have been stopped by the people who are causing the problem. We think yes, obviously this is the only move left to take and we think a sensible nation should observe it.

We have to get the world community to that stage.

• (1120)

An hon. member: How much time do we have?

Mr. Crosbie: I do not think that we have to. I am satisfied myself that this problem could be resolved in four or five years, going as we are, but we do not have four or five years to resolve it. I am of the opinion that we have this year to try to get a resolution of these issues and that if they are not resolved by next year then surely any sensible congregation of people would say: "Well it is time for us in the world to change the rules out there." But we have got a much better chance—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. minister, but other members want to raise questions with the minister. The hon. member for Davenport.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the minister in his interesting analysis of the problem which he put to us, also made reference to the interpretation of functional jurisdiction.

Our distinguished colleague from Winnipeg South will elaborate and offer the minister a very clear explanation as to what we mean in this motion by functional jurisdiction, drawing from the experience of Iceland in the 1970s. We hope that the intervention by our colleague from Winnipeg South will convince the minister that this is an approach that deserves his consideration and support.

My question has to do with a short commentary on the part of the minister on this motion which he said he would interpret as a non-confidence motion.

We do not deem this motion to be a non-confidence motion. Therefore we would like to ask the minister to reconsider his interpretation of the motion as being a non-confidence motion because it is not intended in such a manner. Also, it falls technically within a certain range of motions so that we can convince the minister that this motion deserves the unanimous support of this House.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, as I have tried to explain, we cannot support the motion as it is at the moment because it calls for immediate steps to extend something called functional jurisdiction outside the present 200-mile exclusive fishing zone to the nose and tail of the Grand Banks.

In our view, this would be premature and in fact contrary to the interests of Canada for us to attempt to do this at this time. I am not going to say that the time is not going to come when possibly this might be an option that we have to consider, but I think the House has to recognize that what is being suggested is an extraordinary, highly unusual step which could only be taken or risks everything else having failed.

As I explained in my remarks or hope I have, we have a number of initiatives under way at the moment that we have got to hope will be successful. Yesterday, for example, Mr. Cashin and three or four members of his union met with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has been and is now fully engaged in this matter. He is going to be taking it up intensively with the leaders of countries that make up the European Community, as he has in the past, but this will be at the top of the list for action. I think it is likely that he is going to attend the conference at Rio in June. I do not believe he was looking on that affirmatively until recently because he wants to make sure that this issue gets the proper attention at the conference.

The UNCED process, we have to hope, might be successful as well as the diplomatic steps that we are taking.

So we cannot accept the resolution as it stands for those reasons.