

North Pacific Fishery

This is one problem which still has to be settled, and is another reason for great concern on the coast. The government seems to be pussyfooting about this matter of territorial waters. This afternoon I listened very attentively to hear the hon. member for Skeena say whether or not he thought Hecate strait should be considered Canadian territorial waters; but he made no such suggestion. In fact, he intimated that territorial waters were not very important in so far as this bill is concerned. Yet I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the whole treaty is based on the fact that it covers what is described as a "convention area". From that convention area there are excluded by this bill the territorial waters of the different nations which are parties to the treaty. As far as territorial waters are concerned, if I understand the treaty correctly, a nation can prevent other countries fishing in its territorial waters.

If Hecate strait were considered to be territorial waters, then the Japanese crab fleet could not fish there, the Russians could not come in and fish there, nor could United States fishermen, without our consent. There is concern about the Americans fishing in Hecate strait. On March 20 I asked the parliamentary assistant to try to get me some information about the extent to which the Americans had been fishing for crabs in that strait. I said at page 3163 of *Hansard*:

When the parliamentary assistant is doing that,—

He was getting some other information.

—would he also try to find out what amount of crabfish has been caught by the Americans in Hecate strait. Surely that information can be obtained in one way or another; and it brings up this whole question of what are Canadian territorial waters. Could the parliamentary assistant get that further information?

The reply was:

If it is possible to get that information I will get it.

Now, I cannot see any reason why Canada does not take a firm stand and declare that Hecate strait is Canadian territorial water. This question of territorial waters is of great interest in several countries. In the United States, for example, it is becoming a particularly important question because of the offshore oil. Those members who are interested will find a very enlightening report in the current issue of *U.S. News and World Report* for April 3. The article is entitled "Offshore Oil; What's It About". In our neighbouring country they are now deeply concerned about the question of offshore rights, not only the extent of territorial waters but also the distance to which the United States can control the resources in or under the water.

[Mr. Green.]

For example, in 1945 President Truman laid claim to the resources along the continental shelf off the United States, but apparently the United States government has been careful not to claim that United States boundaries extend that far. They are claiming some right to the resources. Some of the states are claiming rights as far out as 30 miles off the coast. The state of California claims that it has rights 30 miles out to the outermost islands of California; Louisiana claims 27 miles; and Florida and Texas claim 10.5 miles. Apparently in the United States they have now reached the point where they are considering taking the stand that they are entitled to rights as far out as 250 miles from the coast.

With these developments occurring in the United States, the Canadian government should at least be able to make up its mind about Hecate strait, which lies between the Queen Charlotte islands and the mainland of British Columbia. I do not believe there is a single reason why that strait should not be declared Canadian territorial water. In so doing, we would at least eliminate one of the objections raised in connection with this bill.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I do urge the parliamentary assistant and the Acting Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Winters) to have this bill referred to the standing committee. Such a move would mean that it would be carefully considered. The issue is of sufficient importance to warrant that action being taken. I find that when there is a great rush to get legislation through, and a lot of war whoops are given out about the great danger of delay, that we must act quickly in this case because if we do not the Japanese will get us, or some such plea for quick action, usually we end up in a position which is not nearly as beneficial as would be the case if we had taken a little time and done the thing properly. I hope the government will agree to having the bill referred to the committee.

Mr. J. L. Gibson (Comox-Alberni): I intend to be very brief this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, because I think the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Applewhaite) has done an extremely good job of analysing this legislation and putting it into understandable form for those members of the house who are perhaps not familiar with our fisheries problems on the Pacific coast. I agree with what he said about the committee on marine and fisheries having already considered this treaty very carefully, and having brought in a unanimous report supporting the signing of this agreement by Canada.

Personally, I welcome this treaty because it seems to me that it brings into being what I hope is a new era in Pacific fisheries relations. This problem of the protection of our