

Oral Questions

people involved. I think this can rightly and objectively be said to be what happened in this case. These are almost Gestapo-like tactics that the people involved used on this Winnipeg couple. It is totally unfair. I should like to ask the minister whether this has happened very often. Does the department literally have the power to move in and seize records and bank statements as officials have done in this particular case?

Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, the department does have the power to do that, but I believe that the law should be applied with sensitivity. In this particular case I intend to see that it is applied with sensitivity. I do not know all the facts of the case and I do not think it would be proper for me to discuss them here, if I did. However, if the hon. member would like to discuss this with me further I would be glad to do that in order that he and I may both be assured that fairness was done.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**REPORTED CANADA-FRANCE AGREEMENT ON SAINT PIERRE AND MIQUELON ISLANDS**

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He will realize that negotiations have been proceeding between France and Canada on the question of the boundaries between France and Canada surrounding Saint Pierre and Miquelon, which are most important for fishery items and mineral resources on the continental shelf, for some 11 years now.

Is it correct that a treaty was signed between France and Canada on May 26, 1972, by the ambassadors of the two countries, wherein the then Government of Canada agreed to a major and large area going to France with respect to the continental shelf off the south coast of Newfoundland? Was it also agreed that in a further large area France would have the right to decide what oil companies would have the rights to explore and develop, and where oil would go from that area if it was discovered there? Is that correct? If it is, and I am informed that it is, will the minister table or make public that agreement? Is that the reason we have not got anywhere in our negotiations with France in the past nine years, and is the government now afraid to push the matter, having conceded so much in the agreement of May 26, 1972?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I am not aware of the agreement to which my hon. friend refers. To the best of my knowledge the only agreements we have had with France have been with respect to fishing rights in the region and with respect to the delineation of the boundary on the landward side of Saint Pierre and Newfoundland, between those islands and Newfoundland, where the water boundary has been agreed upon. The matter was raised at the meeting here with Premier Mauroy. It was also raised by Foreign Minister Cheysson in

my talks with him. We agreed that we should proceed as quickly as possible with an attempt to delineate the boundaries of those islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Canadian position is that we accept the territorial sea for those islands but not the kind of economic zone which France is claiming for them.

With reference to the claim that these negotiations have been going on for eleven years, I would point out that it was only in 1976 that both Canada and France claimed the extended economic zones which gave rise to the problem, so even the problem itself, let alone the negotiations, has existed for only half the time that the hon. member mentioned.

Mr. Crosbie: Madam Speaker, I would ask the minister to do some home work. I can assure him that there was such an agreement signed by the ambassadors.

REQUEST THAT AGREEMENT BE MADE PUBLIC

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. Does he realize that in the arbitration case between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the French Republic on the delimitation of their continental shelf that the International Court of Justice accepted that document as an agreement between France and Canada on the continental shelf?

Assuming that the minister will do his home work, would he then report to the House and make public this agreement? Would he also advise the House or the public what we are now claiming and exactly where the matter stands? Why did the Government of Canada betray east coast Canadians and the whole of Canada by signing such an agreement in May, 1972, without disclosing it to the world, and why did it keep it secret until this time?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, any betrayal is in the mind of the hon. member. The facts are as I have stated them. We recognize a 12-mile territorial sea for Saint Pierre and Miquelon as emerging international law requires us to do. We do not recognize the claim of 200 miles beyond that of an economic zone which they are claiming. It is precisely that dispute which is now under consideration by the two governments. I can assure the hon. member that we have vigorously supported the claims of the Canadian people in these negotiations.

Mr. Crosbie: Answer the question.

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**GRANTS FOR ONTARIO**

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. The minister should know that over the past two to three years there have been repeated promises from