

Request for Map of Canadian Arctic

are not Canadian, they can no longer realistically argue concerning the status of the two bodies of water in question in light of the fact that the 12-mile territorial sea is well established in international law.

I am sure that the House will agree that these actions by the government are far more important than the issuance of a map of any kind. I would hope, in particular, that the hon. member who has introduced the motion before the House will agree with this view. He has asked for the production of a map showing the Arctic waters claimed by Canada. In reply I would refer him to the statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) in this House on April 16, when he reaffirmed the position adopted by successive Canadian governments and stated that "Canada has always regarded the waters between the islands of the Arctic archipelago as being Canadian waters". As was also stated by the minister, the present government maintains that position. I do not believe that it is necessary to issue a map illustrating the waters referred to by the minister. A glance at any map will indicate to hon. members those waters which lie between the islands of Canada's archipelago.

I should like now to quote at length from another statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs to the House on April 17. The minister's remarks on that occasion are very pertinent to the question now under consideration. I quote:

It is quite clear that whether or not the Canadian government chooses to establish at this time its claim to the whole of the waters of the Arctic archipelago by drawing straight baselines from island to island so as to enclose the waters, the fact that this government does not draw such baselines, and that previous Canadian governments have not done so, does not thereby weaken our sovereignty claim.

Similarly the establishing of a 12-mile territorial sea and the establishment of pollution control zones in these waters cannot be construed as an abandonment of the Canadian position concerning the status of these waters—

I have made clear, as has the Prime Minister, that we will not back down one inch from our basic position on sovereignty but there is no interest on the part of the Canadian government in the exercise of chauvinism.

The production of the map requested in this motion will not fill any practical need.

Mr. Benjamin: How do you know?

Mr. Forest: If the hon. member will listen to the remainder of my remarks, he may be convinced. More important, however, is the fact that it will not serve the interests of the

[Mr. Forest.]

country. The government has already taken several most important steps with respect to the Arctic waters. These steps meet present needs and present purposes. So far as the future is concerned, the government has stated that it will not respond to mere chauvinistic pressures to draw lines of one kind or another on the map of Arctic Canada. Such lines would bind the government's hands with respect to action which might prove necessary in the future. They would deprive us of the flexibility we may require to protect various Canadian interests in the Arctic waters.

The production of a map showing the Arctic waters claimed by Canada would not alter the legal, historical, physical and geographical factors which are relevant to the status of those waters. The Canadian position with respect to the waters between the Arctic islands is well known. The production of a map illustrating that claim would not necessarily advance the claim but might, on the contrary, prejudice the Canadian position on other questions. No useful purpose can be served by the debate upon which we are engaged. I must re-emphasize, however, that this debate could do a real disservice to the country.

The government has proved, Mr. Speaker, with the assistance of this House that Canada is united as seldom before on an issue that transcends regional or political considerations. We have gone a long way in asserting our position and protecting our interest with respect to the Arctic waters. We have done this with a unanimity which is as rare as it is welcome in light of the issues involved. I trust that the House will show the same spirit with respect to the motion under consideration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The House divided on the motion (Mr. Harding) which was negated on the following division:

● (5:30 p.m.)

YEAS

Messrs:

Aiken	Comeau
Alexander	Crouse
Alkenbrack	Dionne
Barnett	Douglas (Nanaimo-
Bell	Cowichan-The
Benjamin	Islands)
Brewin	Downey
Cadiou (Meadow Lake)	Flemming
Coates	Grills