

perception on the part of officials at the time that an issue was an Arctic issue has generally been used as the determining factor. Thus, sovereignty over Hudson Bay – which lies entirely south of the Arctic Circle – is covered. The American military presence in the Northwest Territories (NWT) during the Second World War is also included, even though most of the areas affected were in the subarctic rather than the Arctic. However, the Alaska Boundary dispute is dealt with only insofar as it influenced Ottawa's understanding of the need for occupation and administration in the continental part of the western Arctic. The part of the boundary under dispute lay between British Columbia and the Alaska Panhandle, not between the Yukon Territory and Alaska. Even though access to the Yukon gold fields was a key factor in the dispute, the diplomatic and other exchanges on the subject reveal little about Canada's Arctic policy. Moreover, the most important documents have already been printed in another collection.¹

Within these parameters, the volume attempts to cover all significant episodes in the development of Canada's Arctic policy up to 1949. Not all of the opinions expressed in the documents should be taken at face value, and not all of the incidents mentioned can be considered of major importance. In fact, many of the opinions are either poorly informed or disingenuous, and some of the incidents appear almost trivial in retrospect. Yet even the errors into which Canadian politicians and civil servants sometimes fell are an important part of the historical record, and the cumulative effect of many smaller government initiatives in and regulations about the Far North should not be underestimated. As Lester Pearson wrote in 1946, although the appointment of Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers as postmasters, customs inspectors, and immigration officers involved only "nominal" duties, yet there was "international significance" in the fact that "When a stratosphere liner of the future lands somewhere south of the Pole in its voyage from Europe to Asia, its passengers will find a Canadian flag, a Canadian Government station, and probably a notice stuck somewhere warning the passengers that under Order-in-Council 7496, Section 3, Sub-Section 12, they will be liable to fine or imprisonment or both if they do not extinguish their camp fires!"²

Indeed, routine administration may have had more importance than the various sovereignty scares, all of which were considerably exaggerated. In fact, it could well be argued that the true importance of the scares lay in the fact that they generally led to an increase in routine administration. Another reason for the inclusion of such material is that it offers some sense of the impact that an increased government presence (and the proliferation of new regulations that were often put in place mainly for sovereignty purposes) had on both Indigenous and white inhabitants of the North. For example, see the documents on the end of foreign coastwise trading in the western Arctic (docs 313, 316-319, 326, 327).

¹ John A. Munro, ed., *The Alaska Boundary Dispute* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1970).

² L.B. Pearson, "Canada Looks 'Down North,'" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 24, no. 4 (July 1946), pp. 639-640.