

Statements by Ministers

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): My colleagues, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) will shortly bring to Cabinet recommendations with regard to the design and construction plans. The costs are very high, in the order of \$.5 billion, but the Government is not about to conclude that Canada cannot afford the Arctic.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Meanwhile, we are taking immediate steps to increase surveillance overflights over Arctic waters by Canadian Forces aircraft. In addition, we are now making plans for naval activity in Eastern Arctic waters in 1986. Canada is a strong and responsible member of the international community. Our strength and our responsibility make us all the more aware of the need for co-operation with other countries, and especially with our friends and allies. Co-operation is necessary, not only in defence of our own interests, but in defence of the common interests of the international community. Co-operation adds to our strength and in no way diminishes our sovereignty. The policy of the Government is to offer its co-operation to its friends and allies and to seek their co-operation in return.

● (1530)

We are prepared to explore with the United States all means of co-operation that might promote the respective interests of both countries as Arctic friends, neighbours and allies in the Arctic waters of Canada and Alaska. The United States has been made aware that Canada wishes to open talks on this matter in the near future. Any co-operation with the United States or with other Arctic nations shall only be on the basis of full respect for Canada's sovereignty. That too has been made clear.

In 1970, the Government of the day barred the International Court of Justice from hearing disputes that might arise concerning the jurisdiction exercised by Canada for the prevention of pollution in Arctic waters. The Government of that day said to that court, "Your jurisdiction shall not affect Canada. We will not put our case before that court". This Government will remove that bar. Indeed, we have today notified the Secretary General of the United Nations that Canada is withdrawing the 1970 reservation to its acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the World Court.

The Arctic is a heritage for the people of Canada. They are determined to keep their heritage entire and to keep their heritage intact. The policy of this Government is to give full expression to that determination.

We challenge no established rights, for none have been established except by Canada. We set no precedents for other areas, for no other area compares with the Canadian Arctic archipelago. We are confident in our position. We believe in the rule of law in international relations. We shall act in accordance with our confidence and belief, as we are doing

today in withdrawing the 1970 reservation to Canada's acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the World Court. We are prepared to uphold our position in that Court, if necessary, and to have it fully and freely judged there.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, these are the measures we are announcing today: first, immediate adoption of an Order in Council establishing straight baselines around the Arctic archipelago, to be effective January 1, 1986; second, immediate adoption of a Canadian Laws Offshore Application Act; third, immediate talks with the United States on co-operation in Arctic waters on the basis of full respect for Canadian sovereignty; fourth, an immediate increase of surveillance overflights of our Arctic waters by aircraft of the Canadian Forces, and immediate planning for Canadian naval activity in the Eastern Arctic in 1986; fifth, the immediate withdrawal of the 1970 reservation to Canada's acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice; and sixth, construction of a polar, class 8 ice-breaker and urgent consideration of other means of exercising more effective control over our Arctic waters.

These are the measures which we can take immediately. We know, however, that a long-term commitment is required. We are making that commitment today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to receive the Right Hon. Minister's statement. My only objection is that it is exactly three months too late. When I rose in the House in the middle of June to raise this issue, the Minister remained silent, and today he rose in the House to propose a series of measures that would have been unnecessary if the Government had been truly in control of the situation last summer, when the problem arose.

[*English*]

We have been hearing about the great friendship between the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) and President Reagan of the United States for many, many months. For 15 years the Americans have protested the Bill that I introduced in the House of Commons in 1970 concerning the prevention of Arctic pollution. For 15 years the Americans did not want to challenge the sovereignty of Canada which was reinforced at that time. They never sent a ship through our waters for 15 years.

In September, 1984, when my leader was Prime Minister, they did not come to challenge our sovereignty. They did not do so in the 14 previous years with former Prime Minister Trudeau. However, this summer, with their great friend, the Prime Minister of Canada in office they came and humiliated him. They also came and humiliated the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark). Worse still, they came and humiliated the whole nation by challenging our sovereignty in the north.

If it is true that the motto of the two Governments today is "good friendship", it would have been so easy for the Prime