

Inquiries of the Ministry

We are merely adhering to the general rule as provided by the Geneva convention, and that is our very strong position.

[Later:]

Mr. Stanfield: I should like to return to a subject matter which was opened up at the beginning of the question period and ask the Prime Minister what the next step will be in resolving the dispute between Canada and the United States. Has any procedure been suggested?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I believe I said that the two governments were negotiating and that they were going to have meetings forthwith to try to come to terms on this dispute.

ARCTIC WATERS—POLICY OF GOVERNMENT

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister regarding the matter of Canadian sovereignty over the waters between the islands of the Arctic archipelago. In view of the fact that the statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs outside the House was much more specific than his statement inside the House, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the minister was making a statement of government policy in his comments which were reported in the press and carried over television to the effect that these are our waters, there has never been any question about that, and we have always regarded them as our waters?

An hon. Member: That is the one to answer.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): That is the one, not the one about oil? Yes, Mr. Speaker, when he is talking about "these waters" he is talking about government policy.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that a few days ago a prominent public figure in the United States said that, in the opinion of United States authorities, Canadian sovereignty only extended three miles from the shores of these islands, has the Canadian government made the policy, which the Prime Minister has just endorsed, abundantly clear to the government of the United States?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as we said at the beginning of the session, many of these positions will be stated when we get to the

[Mr. Trudeau.]

debate on control of pollution in the Arctic. In the meantime, of course, there are contacts between the United States government and the Canadian government. I have not heard that any high official of the United States—

Mr. Korchinski: Why wait for spring? Do it now.

Mr. Trudeau: What is that?

Mr. Korchinski: Why wait for spring? Do it now.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

PROJECTED SECOND VOYAGE BY "MANHATTAN" THROUGH NORTHWEST PASSAGE

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, has the government, in the exercise of its newly found courage, advised the Humble Oil Company that the *Manhattan* will not be allowed to go through the Northwest Passage until the Canadian government is assured by inspection or otherwise that the voyage can be made safely and securely?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): As I said in the House a few days ago, Mr. Speaker, only if the Canadian government is convinced that this will be the case and that the voyage can be made safely and securely will it be allowed.

Mr. Baldwin: Has the government advised the oil company to this effect?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, we are engaged in discussions with Humble Oil. We have taken this position. I am saying it publicly in the House now. I do not know to what extent all of it was put in writing or verbally, but this is certainly the Canadian government's position and it should suffice the hon. member to hear me say so.

Mr. Baldwin: I had to persuade you to say it now.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Just a brief supplementary, Your Honour, to the right hon. Prime Minister. Since there seems to be no disagreement in this House about Canada's sovereignty over the Arctic, would the Prime Minister then recommend to his colleague the House Leader that we proceed with item No. 62 on the Order Paper, concurrence in the first report of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development?