

*Routine Proceedings*

Our assessment of the factual basis of the allegations included in our study is based on an extensive survey of official government files, documents, and published and unpublished reports, and learned papers in the possession of the National Archives of Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, various libraries in other government departments, public libraries and sources within the Makivik Corporation.

We found that the decision by the government to actively encourage the relocation of Inuit families to the high Arctic in 1953, and in the two or three years subsequent to that, was not motivated by a concern to strengthen Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic islands at that time.

Canada felt secure in her claim of ownership of the islands at that time, as a result of an exchange of notes between Canada and Norway in 1930, because the Canadian government had consistently displayed its sovereignty in that area for so long and in so many ways as to firmly establish its title to all of the Arctic islands in a manner consistent with international law.

The RCMP participated in the exercise of Canadian sovereignty in the north by their very presence in those areas, and in the various roles they were called upon to carry out their own and on behalf of other federal departments.

They were required from time to time to deal with the illegal hunting of polar bear and musk-oxen by Greenlanders, which was prohibited under the Northwest Territories game ordinance. In carrying out this function, they did indeed assist in asserting Canadian sovereignty.

• (1230)

The study continues:

The Inuit families in question were not relocated to the high Arctic to assist the RCMP in the administration of the Northwest Territories game ordinance, although, in fact, they did so on occasion.

They asserted Canadian Arctic sovereignty by the very fact of living there—

**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the rules of the House do prohibit reading a speech directly into the record, a speech that has been written by the Department of Indian Affairs and previously written into the record by the Minister of State for Indian Affairs.

If it is the intent of the government to simply regurgitate this crap or pap, why do we not just unanimously seek consent to call it one o'clock and get out of here, if that is the attitude of the government toward this very serious matter?

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but I believe there is a certain amount of latitude in this House, and that, since previous speakers on both sides of the House have quoted documents or reports, I should show the same indulgence to both sides of the House.

[English]

**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, would you be prepared to give the House some direction as to whether or not an individual is able to read the same speech into the House twice?

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** The hon. member may wish to consider the fact that every member may use notes or other written material, so that, strictly speaking, this is not a point of order. On the same subject, the parliamentary secretary.

[English]

**Mrs. Dobbie:** Mr. Speaker, it is very important that the members opposite hear the details of the executive summary of the report because, in listening to the speeches and interventions made earlier this morning, it is clear to me that many of the members are not familiar with the report by this independent group. I think it would be very useful to them to understand the details and the finding of the Hickling team.

The study goes on to state:

They asserted Canadian Arctic sovereignty by the very fact of living there, but that was not the purpose of their relocation.

—(The Hickling) report reveals that the main reason for the decision by the government to encourage some Inuit families to relocate to the high Arctic at that time was the concern to improve the living conditions of Inuit, particularly in the Hudson Bay region.

Relocation from those depressed areas was seen, by both government officials and the Inuit themselves, as a way of breaking out of a growing pattern of welfare dependency, and as a means of providing the Inuit with new and better economic opportunities through improving hunting, trapping and wage employment.

The report states:

Reasonable steps were taken by the government officials to establish and apply suitable criteria for the selection of families, so as to ensure that the best success of the project and the security of the participants. These criteria were developed over a period of several years, with input from a number of sources.