resources of Canada's northern continental shelf. There is no need even to comment concerning Canada's long established and universally accepted sovereignty over the land. I did hear some comments today from several members which seemed to suggest they have some doubt about this. I did not think anyone had.

With respect to the seabed, Canada is a signatory of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf which recognizes the "sovereign rights" of coastal states over the continental shelf adjacent to their coasts for the purposes of exploring and exploiting its natural resources. The convention specifies that these rights are exclusive in the sense that if the coastal, state does not explore the continental shelf or exploit its natural resources, no one may do so nor make a claim to the continental shelf without the express consent of the coastal state.

Mr. Lewis: Would the minister restate that sentence, because there seems to be something wrong with it?

Mr. Sharp: I thought so, too.

Mr. Lewis: I said restate it; I did not mean re-read.

• (3:40 p.m.)

Mr. Sharp: The convention says that the rights are exclusive in the sense that even if the coastal state does not exploit them they cannot be exploited by other states without the express consent of the coastal state itself. The convention provides, also, that the rights of coastal states over the continental shelf do not depend upon occupation, effective or notional, or on any express proclamation. The convention defines the continental shelf, and this is a point of some importance, as "the seabed and subsoil of the submarine area adjacent to the coast but outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 meters or, beyond that limit, to where the depth of the subjacent waters admit of the exploitation of the natural resources of the said areas." Of particular interest with respect to the Arctic is that in defining the shelf the convention makes clear that it applies also "to the seabed and subsoil or similar submarine areas adjacent to the coasts of islands".

Canada is engaged, in its capacity as a member of a special UN committee on the seabed, in active discussions and negotiations concerning the development of a legal regime for the peaceful use, in the interest of mankind as a whole, of the seabed beyond national jurisdiction. Such discussions may inevitably develop into consideration of a new and more precise definition of the area where the new international regime is to apply and, thus, where national jurisdiction ends. The Canadian government knows of no basis, however, for any doubt concerning Canada's sovereign rights over Canada's northern continental shelf, and I feel no need to elaborate further on this issue.

Turning to the status of the waters, members of the House are aware that the United States government has publicly called into question the Canadian view that the waters of the Arctic archipelago are Canadian. We respect, of course, the right of the United States to their view, but we cannot and shall not abandon the long-standing Canadian position on this question. The government was criticized yesterday concerning the possible effects of the Arctic pollution prevention bill and the bill we are now debating upon Canada's claim that the waters of the Arctic archipelago are Canadian.

I referred yesterday, in reply to that point when it was made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), to the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 1910 in the North Atlantic coast fisheries case between Britain and the United States. The subject matter of that dispute was the privileges enjoyed by the inhabitants of the United States, in common with British subjects, to the fisheries of Newfoundland, Labrador and other parts of the North Atlantic coast. In particular, the historic bays of Newfoundland, such as Chaleur, Conception and Miramichi were called into question.

The tribunal referred to the argument of the United States that Great Britain during the period preceding the hearing of the case had abandoned its claims that these bays were historical, and therefore the three-mile limit should be applied to them. I propose to quote from the decision of the tribunal on this abandonment argument:

> Neither should relaxations of this claim, as are in evidence, be construed as renunciations of it; nor should omissions to enforce the claim in regard to bays as to which any controversy arose, be so construed.

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