

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR MAP SHOWING ARCTIC WATERS CLAIMED BY CANADA

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West)
moved:

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of a map showing Arctic waters claimed by Canada.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this motion which is now before the House requesting a copy of a map showing the Arctic waters claimed by Canada was first moved just about a year ago. At that time the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) indicated it was not in the interest of Canada to issue such a map, despite the fact that for many years we have had Canadian maps, particularly those in school atlases, showing that the Arctic areas did belong to our nation. It seems to me the time is long past when Canada and Canadians should know definitely that the Canadian government lays claim to that area in the Arctic archipelago lying between our Canadian mainland and the north pole.

I should like to say it is not only a handful of individuals in this House who have been requesting action along these lines. We find that the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development, in a very recent report to this House, made a unanimous recommendation that the government lay claim to sovereign ownership of the Arctic areas. Incidentally, this report from the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development came to this House and received the endorsement of the members in the House. In view of some of the legislation the government has brought in, such as the bill to extend for 100 miles from the Arctic islands our control over the navigation in this area, it would seem to me the government is concerned about protecting our Arctic area from the possibility of oil pollution derived from shipping.

So far as Canadians are concerned, there is no doubt that this move was welcomed by everyone from the east coast to the west coast because they felt that at long last we were starting to assert our claim to sovereignty in this area. I feel the time has come for the government to take a firm and decisive stand on this matter. I feel there is nothing to be lost by doing that. That is why I have moved

Request for Map of Canadian Arctic
this motion asking for a copy of a map showing the Arctic waters claimed by our nation.

• (5:00 p.m.)

It is not as though Canada had not previously staked out a claim to ownership in this vital area; an area which is becoming more interesting and more vital as time goes on. The discovery by the Americans of oil in the Prudhoe Bay area several months ago focussed the attention not only of Canada but of the other nations of the world on the vast potential oil wealth that exists in the north. This was all the more reason for Canada to claim what we have always considered to be Canadian territory. Canada can base its claim to the northern territory on three precedents, and three very sound precedents at that. This has been pointed out in the House by a number of hon. members, but it bears repetition. For example, we can lay claim to the area through what is known as the sector principle.

In 1946 the Right Hon. Lester Pearson, who was then Canadian Ambassador to Washington, reasserted the sector claim which Canada had made in 1908, and which included all land, water and ice up to the North Pole. The U.S.S.R. still maintains its extensive sector claim which it first propounded in 1926, and which it interprets as including not only lands within the sector but also the ice, water and air space. According to this precedent, Canada's claim to the area is an excellent one.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have the baseline system. Here again, our Canadian claim to the territory can be established by precedent. Under the baseline system a nation draws straight baselines from headland to headland and claims all waters within these lines as being under its jurisdiction. The straight baseline system was first adopted by Norway, and it included within its baselines some waters which had previously been recognized as international waters. Norway's case was upheld by the International Court of Justice in the well known fisheries case decided in 1951, less than 20 years ago. The Geneva Conference on the Law of the Sea approved this system and it has become part of international law. Thus, we have a second basis upon which Canada can justifiably lay claim to this area in the north.

The third basis is the continental shelf doctrine. The continental shelf doctrine was proclaimed by President Truman in 1945 as a method of laying claim to jurisdiction over the