

THE ARCTIC

Since the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, set out the government's position on the Arctic in his statement to the House of Commons on September 10, 1985, a number of measures have been taken to strengthen Canada's presence in the Arctic.

These measures include:

- drawing of straight baselines around the perimeter of the islands of Canada's Arctic archipelago, effective January 1, 1986;
- introduction in the House of Commons, on April 9, 1986, of a Bill (the Canadian Laws Offshore Application Act) that provides for a comprehensive legal regime for Canadian offshore areas;
- withdrawal of Canada's 1970 reservations to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice;
- announcement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that Canada would engage in talks with the United States on cooperation in Arctic waters, on the basis of full respect for Canadian sovereignty. At their April 5-6 1987 Summit, the Prime Minister and President Reagan agreed to inject new impetus into the discussions already underway and pledged their determination to find a solution based on mutual respect for sovereignty and our common security and other interests;
- commencement of negotiations for a design contract for the Polar 8 icebreaker, to be followed in a year by the construction contract;
- strengthening of Canada's Arctic infrastructure and control; and,
- strengthening of Canada's defence in the Arctic.