



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/7

ARCTIC WEATHER STATIONS

Statement made in the House of Commons on February 9, 1954, by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Lionel Chevrier

On March 4, 1947, announcement was made in the House that the Canadian and United States Governments had decided to establish weather stations in the Canadian Arctic which were to be operated by the Canadian Meteorological Service and the United States Weather Bureau on a basis of each service providing an equivalent number of personnel. It was then announced that the Canadian Government would supply the permanent structures and that the United States would temporarily furnish necessary water and air transportation.

That year, a United States task force, sailing from Boston on July 15, and consisting of two icebreakers and a supply ship, made their way to Resolute Bay on Cornwallis Island and to Eureka Sound on Ellesmere Island. Weather stations were established at these two points. Since then three additional Arctic weather stations were established at Mould Bay, Isachsen and Alert and have been in operation on a 24-hour day ever since. All these weather stations are located in the area recently designated as Queen Elizabeth Islands. For the first few years, the re-supply of these Arctic stations was carried out by sea and air operations of the U.S. forces but the air lift to stations which cannot be supplied by water transportation has been gradually taken over by the R.C.A.F.

With respect to transportation by sea to these Arctic outposts, Canada has been able to supplement the work of the United States task force during the last two summers. In 1952, the Department of Transport's Arctic supply ship, the CGS "C.D. Howe" delivered some supplies at Resolute and last summer, the Department's new icebreaker, the CGS "d'Iberville", repeated the operation at this main weather station.

It is my pleasure to be able to inform the House that this year, Canada will assume full responsibility for the re-supply of all Arctic weather stations with the exception of Alert. My Department will, this summer, send up a convoy consisting of two large icebreakers with the Department's Arctic supply ship the "C.D. Howe", a dry cargo vessel and a tanker.

The departmental vessels will be carrying out this special work in addition to their regular duties in Arctic and sub-Arctic waters. The CGS "C.D. Howe" will carry out, as in previous years, medical, dental and supply work at government outposts in the Hudson Bay and Strait, Baffin Island and lower Ellesmere Island as well as at Resolute. The "C.D. Howe" will rendezvous with the convoy in northern waters.