

industrial development activities as a partial offset to the work that had been expected from Alsands.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—FRENCH CLAIMS TO ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the visit to Canada last month of the President of France and subsequently of France's Prime Minister, it was the hope of many Canadians that there might be some progress in the sticky issue of the maritime claims made by France on behalf of St. Pierre and Miquelon stretching out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It was for that reason that on April 23, as recorded on page 16555 of *Hansard*, I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) about any talks that he may have had with the President or the Prime Minister on that subject; and in his usual, flippant, none-of-your-damned-business sort of attitude, he turned the question aside as if it concerned no other Canadian but himself. I would like to assure him, Mr. Speaker, through you, and also through the parliamentary secretary who will be replying to me this evening, that there are Canadians interested in this matter, and that his flippancy and insouciance are quite out of place and are no comfort at all to them in their concerns over this issue.

The claims are extensive. The first questions I would like to put before the government are these. Will they reveal how extensive those French claims are? How many thousand square miles at the entrance of the Gulf are at issue? What principles are employed by the French in developing their claim? Does it extend 200 nautical miles into the Gulf's approaches?

● (2220)

My request for more detailed information on France's claim over these waters stems from the belief that, if made public in Canada, France's negotiating position would be considerably undercut because, as I understand it, France's claims are verging on the outrageous. Why not, then, make France's outrageous claim public so as to win support in Canada in opposition to it?

I have a second set of questions which relate to a set of documents, initiated as long ago as 1972 at the level of ambassadors, being an acceptance of France's claim over these waters. That set of documents which, I suppose, were negotiating documents, has since, I believe, been repudiated by Canada and yet they were used, I am told, by the French at the Hague in their attempt to settle with Britain the demarcation of the Anglo-French maritime boundary in and around the Channel islands.

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My request is this: will the government table that exchange of documents outlining an agreement in principle, presumably? Their reluctance to do so, especially after repudiating it, as I believe to be the case, can only suggest a desire to keep from the Canadian people a stance that they once held on maritime boundaries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence which they now hope will be forgotten.

As the government knows, the 200-mile "exclusive economic zone", unilaterally declared almost five years ago by Canada, is within an ace of becoming enshrined in international law. One of the steps in that process was taken only last Friday in New York by a vote of 130 to 4, with 17 abstentions, of the International Convention on the Law of the Sea. I hope we will be able to discuss that matter on another occasion.

What concerns me tonight, however, is that in the midst of that 200-mile zone which will be Canada's exclusive economic zone, the French are claiming a substantial enclave and probably demanding as well free access to it from the open sea. What assurances do our fishermen have that even without such a guaranteed corridor the French fishermen will not fill up their batches in transit? Do we have enough power in Fisheries patrol vessels to monitor these vessels? What about the territorial sea around St. Pierre and Miquelon? What about transit rights for civilians and overflight rights? What about subsoil resources and the claims being made by France? Will Canada throw away even more of its riches to placate a passive ally in NATO for domestic reasons? The government must come clean on France's claim some time. I suggest that it is better now than later.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the concern expressed by the hon. member. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has already spoken on this question, especially about the stopover made by the French Prime Minister in St. Pierre-Miquelon before visiting us in Ottawa. The Prime Minister of Canada has indicated that there is no cause to speculate on why the French Prime Minister visited St. Pierre and Miquelon before Ottawa or why he went there, except to say that the visit was a natural one since the islands are a French overseas department and it is thus fitting that the French Prime Minister should stop there when the occasion arises. The visit to Canada was such an occasion.

There is not necessarily much connection here with the present disagreement with Canada and France over delimitation of the maritime boundary. The French Prime Minister could well have visited the islands. Nevertheless, going there would give him a personal insight into the situation and into the feelings of the local population. As you know from their joint press conference, the subject of delimitation of the maritime boundary off St. Pierre and Miquelon was discussed by the two Prime Ministers in a positive way. The French