

CANADA/USA MARITIME BOUNDARIES
AND FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS

Canada has been conducting continental shelf delimitation negotiations for a number of years with the United States, France and Denmark, which, along with Canada, are parties to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf. Negotiations with the United States in 1970 and 1975/76 with respect to the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank area, seaward of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, seaward of Dixon Entrance, and the Beaufort Sea did not produce agreement. Negotiations with France in 1967 and 1972 on the boundary around St. Pierre and Miquelon were also inconclusive. Negotiations with Denmark led to the signature of a treaty in 1973 delimiting part of the continental shelf between Canada and Greenland. The extension of Canadian fisheries jurisdiction from 12 to 200 miles on January 1, 1977 and parallel moves on the part of the United States, France and Denmark that same year, added fishing zone delimitation to the unresolved continental shelf delimitation issues.

Reviewing these matters in 1977, the Canadian Government decided to give first priority to negotiations with the USA, since the number of boundaries in question and the economic implications of the related resource issues were greatest here. Consequently, on July 27, 1977 the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States announced the appointment of Special Negotiators Marcel Cadieux and Lloyd N. Cutler respectively. The two Negotiators were instructed to report to Governments in October 1977 on the principles of a comprehensive settlement encompassing maritime boundaries delimitation and complementary fishery and hydrocarbon resource arrangements and then to develop the substance of an ad referendum comprehensive settlement.

On the Canadian side, Ambassador Cadieux organized a negotiating team drawn from the Departments of External Affairs; Fisheries and Environment; Energy, Mines and Resources, and Justice. Meetings with the United States commenced in mid-August and continued on a rotating basis, mainly in Washington and Ottawa. The Canadian delegation held periodic consultations with the Premiers, Ministers and officials of the provinces of British Columbia, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and with representatives of the fishing industry and fishermen's organizations on both the West and East Coasts. In addition, provincial officials and fishing industry representatives formed a Fisheries Advisory Group to the Canadian negotiating team.