

offered its recognition in August 1930, it was only on the condition that Norwegians should have guaranteed rights regarding economic activities (docs 504, 505). Skelton was inclined to acquiesce, but Finnie strengthened his resolve and pointed out that the existence of the Arctic Islands Game Preserve precluded any such rights for foreigners in the archipelago (docs 511-513). Further problems were caused when Bordewick informed the Department of External Affairs that Sverdrup did not possess any documents of the kind demanded by the agreement.³⁶ In the end, Norway accepted Canada's statement that the desired rights could not be provided (docs 523, 524). The note sent by the British representative in Oslo added that, if the game regulations were ever changed, Norwegians would of course be free to apply for the necessary permits to carry on economic activities in the archipelago. This remark was of no legal significance, since if the regulations were changed, all Canadians and foreigners would naturally be able to make such applications. Oslo was assured only that applications from Norwegian citizens would meet with "most friendly consideration." With this matter finally settled, the payment to Sverdrup was made, and in return his journals were sent to Ottawa.

James White had died in 1928, but Lester Pearson (a future Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Prime Minister), who was asked to investigate the legal side of the Sverdrup Islands issue, read White's 1925 memos and was strongly influenced by them (see docs 459, 522). However, once Norway had formally recognized Canada's title, Arctic policy was no longer accorded high priority by the Department of External Affairs. In terms of both theory and practice, a clear shift was evident. The goals of the 1925 sector claim had been achieved through the acquiescence of the United States and the recognition accorded by Norway. And, after transarctic flights by Roald Amundsen and Hubert Wilkins, no sign of the fabled northern continent, or indeed any other new land, had been found. Accordingly, to some officials, including Finnie, the sector principle no longer seemed essential to Canada's position (doc. 527).

The most northerly of the RCMP posts had been placed on the Bache Peninsula, Ellesmere Island, in 1926. The location was chosen mainly because it was on the best overland route to the Sverdrup Islands (doc. 369). However, the post itself was often difficult to reach by ship. In 1931, Skelton readily agreed that the Bache post should no longer be manned year-round (docs 529-531). Increasingly, Arctic policy was handled by the Northwest Territories Council – which had begun to meet more frequently during 1929 – rather than by the Northern Advisory Board. The NAB appears to have held its last meeting in March 1931. At the end of 1931, the NWTYB was eliminated as part of Depression-era reductions in the civil service. Both Finnie and Craig took early

³⁶ Bordewick to External Affairs, 15 October 1930, LAC, RG 25, vol. 2667, file 9057-A-40.