

Beaufort Sea

The USA claims a maritime boundary based on equidistance from the termination of the land boundary on the 141st meridian. The Canadian position, based on our interpretation of the language of Article III of the 1825 Russian-British Convention of St. Petersburg, is that the maritime boundary should follow the 141st meridian -- in effect, a direct seaward extension of the land boundary.

Recent Developments

In October, 1985, United States Secretary of State Shultz suggested to the Secretary of State for External Affairs that Canada and the United States might undertake preliminary discussions and possible negotiations on outstanding maritime boundary issues. United States officials later indicated that they would be interested in focussing first on west coast maritime boundaries.

Mr. Clark consulted the Government of British Columbia on this matter and received the views of numerous groups and communities on the west coast. In the light of these consultations, Mr. Clark concluded that this was not an opportune time to resume discussions with the USA on west coast maritime boundaries and, in August, 1986, he so informed the United States Secretary of State.