

Eighth session of the
United Nations Group of Experts
on Geographical Names

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Item 6 of the
Provisional Agenda

Report by the Divisions

United States of America and Canada Division

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As reported to previous sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and especially the report to the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (E/CONF.69/L.32), names authorities of the United States of America and of Canada continue to work together to solve problems that concern both nations. Because of these efforts, most of the major problems have been solved, and remaining issues are relatively small in scale.

One item that required attention in 1978 was the naming of water bodies around the boundary separating the United States of America and Canada, including the Strait of Georgia, Haro Strait, Rosario Strait, Puget Sound, Boundary Pass, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the San Juan Islands. The issue was that the United States and Canada, as well as the state of Washington (U.S.A.), and the Province of British Columbia (Canada) had differing applications for the names. Tentative agreements were reached for limits of these bodies, except unresolved was the difference in local use of the name Juan de Fuca Strait in Canada and the Strait of Juan de Fuca in the United States. Further examination of this problem is continuing. Among those attending this meeting, held in February of 1978, were Mr. Donald J. Orth, Executive Secretary for Domestic Geographic Names of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, Mr. Donald F. Pearson of British Columbia, who represented the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, and Mr. Gene R. Little, Executive Secretary of Washington State Board on Geographic Names.

Also during the period under consideration, Mr. Richard R. Randall, Executive Secretary of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, and Mr. Alan Rayburn, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, maintained close communication concerning other matters.