

## **Map casts doubt over Hans Island**

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**OTTAWA—Modern mapping technology has pinpointed a new wrinkle in Canada's war of words with Denmark over tiny Hans Island.**

**After reviewing the latest satellite imagery, federal officials concede the international boundary line runs roughly through the middle of the island in Arctic waters – not east of the rocky outcrop as previously believed, memos obtained by The Canadian Press reveal.**

**It means the most up-to-date map endorsed by Ottawa no longer places Hans Island squarely in Canadian territory.**

**Uninhabited Hans Island, the size of several city blocks, sits in the Kennedy Channel of Nares Strait between Canada's Ellesmere Island and Greenland, which is controlled by Denmark.**

**Each country claims the barren patch of rock as its own, leading to a much-publicized dispute.**

**Canada and Denmark called a truce in September 2005 and have met periodically to discuss the issue. The most recent negotiations took place last month in Ottawa.**

**A draft December 2006 memo prepared by Natural Resources Canada says due to the "sensitivity related to sovereignty" the department had been reviewing all requests for topographic information related to Hans Island.**

**As a result, it was discovered that topographic maps originally used in 1967 to determine the island's co-ordinates are not as accurate as maps more recently compiled with newer satellite imagery, says the memo, obtained under the Access to Information Act.**

**The boundaries of the continental shelf between Ellesmere Island and Greenland were agreed upon in 1973. Since Hans Island was under dispute, the shelf line was drawn up to a point south of the island and continued from a point north of it.**

**On the 1967 map, Hans Island was set at co-ordinates "clearly positioning the entire island in Canadian territory," the draft memo says.**

**However, the latest imagery places the island somewhat to the east, "which then puts the international boundary approximately in the middle of the Island."**

**Rob Huebert, a political science professor at the University of Calgary, said Denmark will likely use the new information as ammunition in its sovereignty claim.**