

Pollution of Chedabucto Bay

yet complete enough to permit the government to take a decision or to accept this engineer's recommendations. I regret, however, that the government has not asked expert engineers to consider the economic possibilities of such a project.

In short, the minister has just said that the provinces have not the required authority to undertake such projects. It may be so, but it is also true that the federal government cannot take any unilateral decision regarding the diversion of waters falling under provincial jurisdiction.

We know what happened about the Columbia River project in British Columbia, and I am convinced that if the federal government at any time attempted to initiate such a project alone in the province of Quebec, the authorities would object. The consent of both levels of government is required in order to initiate such a project.

They claim it is not necessary at this time, but I wish to point out to the minister and to the government that there is much talk at present about water pollution. In the North, we have huge quantities of unused water. This is a natural resource that renews itself continually. Now, it merges with the sea. I suggest this might be a way of settling, at least partially, the problem of water pollution.

We are told that only three per cent of the earth's water is drinking water, of which two per cent is ice. I believe this natural resource could be made to help the Canadian people, and the government should, with the co-operation of Quebec and Ontario, undertake as soon as possible the necessary studies in this field.

[English]

POLLUTION

**SOUTH COAST OF NEWFOUNDLAND—
CHEDABUCTO BAY—REPORT ON
PRESENT SITUATION**

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, on Friday last I announced the appointment of a special project group, headed by Dr. P. D. McTaggart-Cowan, to deal with the problems created by the grounding of the oil tanker *Arrow* in Chedabucto Bay, Nova Scotia. Dr. McTaggart-Cowan is, of course, a very distinguished Canadian scientist who is executive director of the Canadian Science Council. Other members of the special group are: Dr. H. Sheffer, Vice-Chairman of the Defence Research

[Mr. Laprise.]

Board and Captain M. Martin of Maritime Command of the armed services.

• (2:40 p.m.)

Dr. McTaggart-Cowan and his associates were also asked to investigate and make recommendations concerning the oil slick reported last week off the south coast of Newfoundland. I am advised by them that this particular spill is not of major proportions. It was serious, of course, because of its effect on sea birds in the vicinity. At last report, however, very little oil had reached the Newfoundland coast, the bulk of it, according to on-the-spot reports, having been broken up and dispersed by high seas and offshore winds. Should oil appear on the Newfoundland coast in any significant quantity, clean-up crews will be sent to the affected area immediately.

The project group has now made a thorough study of the Chedabucto Bay area. It has also enlisted the support of various other agencies throughout Canada and the United States including, for example, authorities on fisheries and ecology and others with specialized knowledge of oil removal techniques. Imperial Oil, who were the charterers, have of course co-operated from the beginning and their continued co-operation is important.

So far as is known, this is the first serious oil spill to occur in waters as cold as those to be found, at this time of year, off the Canadian east coast. Therefore there is virtually no past experience on which the project group can draw; indeed, as has been stated repeatedly by all authorities in the field, successful techniques have not yet been developed anywhere in the world for coping quickly, effectively and safely with this type of situation.

Mr. Forrestall: Believe me, that is very true.

Mr. Jamieson: The basic problem is, of course, one of containment and disposal in ways that will prove least harmful to the environment. Dr. McTaggart-Cowan, his associates and advisers have given me a first report on their investigation and proposed solutions and I will attempt to pass this information along in as clear a manner as possible to hon. members.

First, as to general conditions in the area. The heavy type oil that has leaked from the grounded vessel has, for the most part, reached the largely rocky shoreline of Chedabucto Bay. Because of its consistency virtually all the oil has remained on the surface.