

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Bill

their breasts again, saying we must stick together with our glorious American ally to ensure that this continent was adequately defended. Now they are reversing their stand and trying to pick a fight with the United States on an issue where there is no quarrel at all. As we move toward Bill C-203 we might hear the trumpets sounded in clear tones by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

An hon. Member: A cracked trumpet.

Mr. Dinsdale: If that is done, there is no need to pursue the debate on Bill C-203 at the present time, though it will be important to ensure in committee that it is adequate to carry out the difficult task with which it professes to be concerned, to ensure that the United States government recognizes Canadian sovereignty and in doing so will work co-operatively with Canada in the task of controlling our polluted natural environment in the North American region.

Mr. Jack Cullen (Sarnia): Mr. Speaker, at the outset it was not my intention to participate in this debate.

An hon. Member: A good idea.

Mr. Cullen: I am sorry the front bench of the opposition thinks so little of the backbenchers on this side of the House, but I shall try to improve that situation as we go along.

Mr. Dinsdale: Your own front bench takes the same attitude.

Mr. Cullen: Earlier speakers described the bill as being bold and imaginative, and I assumed this attitude would be universally accepted.

Mr. Dinsdale: It is.

Mr. Cullen: I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) say we had taken no interest in the Arctic until approximately ten years ago. I assume that this period dovetails with the period the Conservative Party was in power. I would point out to the hon. member that the International Nickel Company was in 1950 known as the Canadian Nickel Company and was undertaking mining exploration in the Northwest Territories. The company received the utmost co-operation not only from the Department of Transport, which set up communications and landing facilities, but from the Department of National Defence and our United States allies who at that time were

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

stationed at Churchill, Manitoba. This is only one instance that I am aware of, having worked for the company at that time.

• (3:20 p.m.)

I know from personal experience that the Canadian government at that time—a Liberal one, if you will—saw that there was a future in the north and were doing something in a positive way about it. So this is not something brand new or dreamed up only ten years ago.

Mr. Dinsdale: It goes back to 1867.

Mr. Cullen: That was a pretty good year. This piece of legislation is bold and imaginative in that I see it establishing for Canada a kind of green belt around the Arctic, an area where we have some control. We are passing this legislation as an indication that this is our land and that these are our waters, that we intend to see that they are not polluted by ships such as that which sank in Chedabucto Bay.

Mr. Nielsen: Let us see your black belt.

Mr. Cullen: I will introduce some members of the opposition to my black belt leader if they do not quieten down. In this particular area Canada does have jurisdiction. Not only have we the opportunity but we have the obligation to pass the kind of legislation that is before the House today. The Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux) indicates that Canada will establish a headquarters there and station armed forces personnel in the area. I suggest it is picayune for the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) to argue about numbers. I can think of large areas of the Arctic where one Mountie had sole jurisdiction, and at that time there was no suggestion that Canada did not have sovereignty simply because there was only one Mountie for such a large expanse of territory.

However, I compliment the hon. member for Yukon on the kind of work and research that he has obviously done. I found the comments that he made about history and the declarations that were made on behalf of Canada very interesting. They will be most helpful if it should become necessary to sit down at a table to discuss our rights to this particular part of Canada. I was a little disappointed that the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) indicated that this was a question we should have taken to the world court.

Mr. Lewis: I did not say that. Read what I said.