

Navigable Waters Protection Act

a subsidy, a sort of hidden extra benefit for the oil company that intends to ship by sea. The pipeline, which perhaps might be an alternate and better method of transporting oil is not given this, subsidy and so the cost comparison, which may involve hundreds of millions of dollars or even billions of dollars, is severely distorted.

I think we should reject the arguments put forward by the shipping interests, although I must say they were most interesting and ingenious, and go back to the position of Canada prior to the Brussels meeting at which, as I have stated, we unfortunately failed to have our views accepted. It is, therefore, my purpose in moving this particular amendment to the Navigable Waters Protection Act to do precisely what should have been done last year with Bill S-23, clause 24.

As it happens, my Bill C-39 was written in 1968 before I had any knowledge of last year's government bill. Nevertheless, the way things have turned out, perhaps my bill is as valid as ever. Had Bill S-23 been passed in its entirety and not been amended by the Senate, then perhaps my bill would have become redundant. However, there are two events which have occurred since then. One was the rejection by the Senate of the clause I mentioned. The second was the failure of Canada to succeed at the International Maritime Consultative Organization meeting. Therefore, this particular amendment once more becomes one of considerable validity.

I cannot in all fairness see why we should except oil and shipping interests from the cost of pollution, an exception which makes pollution something to be borne by the public, just as the results of an act of God must be borne by the public. Pollution such as I have described results from some human action, such as somebody putting oil on a ship and somebody else having that ship go from A to B. The suggestion that if the ship is cut in two by another ship, or hits a rock through no fault of the owner, the captain or the company, then that is an act of God, the costs of which should be borne by others, is obviously absurd. Human direction has been given to put that ship where it may get into difficulty. It is only logical to assume that the people who initiate such action, the person who puts oil on board, and the shipping company should bear the cost of any subsequent cleanup. We are not dealing with small sums of money. We are dealing with enormous figures. I understand the sinking of the *Torrey Canyon* led to cleaning up costs of something in the neighbourhood of \$12 million to \$20

[Mr. Anderson.]

million. The Santa Barbara disaster off the California coast, which was not caused by a ship but by oil seepage from the seabed, led to property damages estimated at \$1 billion. We are in an area in which there is tremendous cost.

I think that only by forcing all shipping lines and oil companies which transport oil by sea to take out the appropriate and necessary insurance are we ever going to make sure that we really do get around the difficulty posed by these disasters. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this particular bill will not be talked out, and that it will be possible to amend the motion so as to send it either to the committee on environmental pollution or the committee on transport, rather than to the one on health and welfare as the motion now reads.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, once again I find myself in the peculiar position of rising to address myself to a motion moved by the hon. member and being in agreement with the principle but having a few questions at the back of my mind about the practical realities of the bill itself. I appreciate the hon. member's remarks about what seems to be the intent of government. I think the intention of the government is clear, and I think it is a step that we can not only support, but upon which we can urge the government to move more swiftly. If the hon. member's bill has that effect, then he has done a good service indeed. However, Mr. Speaker, there are some things in the bill that surprise me because the hon. member is a seafaring man.

I do not know whether his yacht is still in our delightful province, or whether he has it en route to British Columbia. However, I am tempted by the lack of his awareness, at least as indicated by what is in the bill, to say that while the hon. gentleman does have some knowledge of bathtub races and concrete boats,—he is somewhat of an expert in the latter thing—he has not addressed himself in his bill to the practical reality of ownership of a vessel or its cargo at the time of an accident to the vessel.

It must be borne in mind that accidents with vessels on the high seas, in coastal waters or in our ports are not deliberate things. They are indeed acts of God and the owners of these vessels have taken—perhaps what is no longer valid in terms of the dangers from pollution—reasonable precautions to insure and protect themselves against loss. I think all of us are aware that this has