

Canada Shipping Act

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE OF PAPERS,
"FOREIGN POLICY FOR CANADIANS"

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council) moved:

That the papers entitled "Foreign Policy for Canadians", laid before the House June 25, 1970, be referred to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

Motion agreed to.

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CANADA SHIPPING ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DISCHARGE OF POLLUTANTS
BY SHIPS

The House resumed, from Friday, October 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Jamieson that Bill C-2, to amend the Canada Shipping Act, be read the second time and referred to the Special Committee on Environmental Pollution.

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak on Bill C-2, an act to amend the Canada Shipping Act. The bill deals primarily with one of the most pressing problems in our society today, namely, the pollution of our environment. Quite frankly the first question that comes to my mind is, why didn't the government put this bill under the authority of the new ministry of environmental affairs which is to be under the control of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis)? When raising this point, I do not question the ability of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) to deal with the problems arising from the pollution of our waters by oil tankers or merchant shipping, for I give him full marks for the efforts he and his department made in cleaning up the *Arrow* oil spill in Chedabucto Bay.

I regret it is not possible for the Minister of Transport to be here today but I believe he is well aware that the pollution of our water, air and soil, by oil and other hazardous substances is of direct interest not only to his department but also to the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Department of National Health and Welfare, the Department of National Defence and the Department of Public Works.

It was my understanding from the words in the Throne Speech dealing with pollution control, coupled with the explanation given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), that something definite would be done in this session to solve our pollution problems, and that the authority to do this would be vested in the Minister of Fisheries. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, in all frankness what other interpretation can we, as members of this House, place upon the

[Mr. Turner.]

words of our Prime Minister when he said on October 9, as reported at page 35 of *Hansard*:

A bill relating to the organization of the government will also be introduced shortly, proposing the establishment of a department concerned with renewable resources and environmental affairs which would have as its core the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, whose functions will be expanded to bring under the direction of a single minister the principal governmental activities relating to environmental quality in general, and pollution in particular.

By transferring to the Department of Fisheries and Forestry elements of the meteorological branch of the Department of Transport and the general responsibilities related to air pollution of the Department of National Health and Welfare, the principal governmental activities relating to the fight against atmospheric pollution will be brought together within one department.

The transfer of the bulk of the water sector of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and the transfer of the responsibility for the Canada Water Act from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, (Mr. Greene) to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry will combine under the direction of one minister and his department general responsibility for the development of our water resources and the more particular responsibility of the protection of the water habitat of our marine life.

Finally, the transfer of the Canadian Wildlife Service from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the Department of Fisheries and Forestry will bring together in one department responsibility for our renewable resources including, notably, the related research activities required for the effective discharge of these responsibilities.

These, Mr. Speaker, are the words of our Prime Minister, and yet the second bill brought into this House in this session is entirely contradictory to the outline he gave us of the government's plans for pollution control in Canada. Naturally, we cannot help but wonder why the Prime Minister has changed his mind. His original proposal made some sense to us, as the Minister of Fisheries has far-reaching authority under the Fisheries Act which, if implemented, would go a long way towards cleaning up the poisons presently destroying our oceans, our rivers and our lakes. However, in retrospect it is better to have this bill amending the Canada Shipping Act under the Minister of Transport than no act at all, since our pollution problems have reached gigantic proportions in Canada. We, therefore, support the bill in principle.

At present we have no way of knowing the amount of pollutants that cloud our air, foul our water, and destroy our soil, since science has not yet devised uniform and accurate standards for carrying out this type of measurement. In like vein, we have no way of knowing the cost of cleaning up our pollution problems. Everyone knows it is going to be expensive, but how do you measure the cost when a polluted stream loses its fish, or a breeding ground can no longer support its water fowl?

Canada is blessed with one quarter of the world's known fresh water volume, with 117,000 miles of ocean shoreline, and with one of the world's best concentrations of game, birds and fish. We are now belatedly aware that all are threatened by the creeping inroads of pollution, and while our problem is immense we are still not suffering as much as the people residing in the United States. It now appears that water pollution has probably killed more people than all the wars in history. Millions die