

*Northern Inland Waters Bill*

am concerned the amendment does highlight a matter that is very pertinent to the whole question of the water resources in the territories and, indeed, the whole of Canada. All of us who have been following such matters are well aware of the various proposals advanced from time to time which would involve major diversions of water resources in the territories, across the central provinces of Canada and down into regions as far away as southern California and New Mexico, well beyond the territorial borders of our country.

● (4:00 p.m.)

For this reason, my colleagues and I welcome the fact that the official opposition has seen fit to introduce this element into the consideration of the proposal we now have before us. This element is one which obviously is pretty difficult to ignore within the context of what has been happening. At the same time I believe the speech of the minister in introducing the bill raises certain other very important issues, as indeed did the speech of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin). I have looked at the bill. In some ways it is a rather complicated bill. I think there will have to be considerable discussion in the committee before one will be fully aware of the exact meaning of all the clauses.

I might raise the question of whether the Dominion Water Power Act or this bill will take precedence in certain situations. One might go on, of course and refer to the old mining acts of the Yukon Territory in this connection. These are questions which can be dealt with in detail if the bill, including the principle proposed in the amendment, according to the decision of the House, gets into the Committee of the Whole.

One thing which concerned me was the rather flowery way in which the minister opened and closed his contribution to the debate on the bill. If I may say so, his speech was like a sandwich, with some meat in the centre of it, enclosed by two slices of a rather floury and fluffy substance. He went to great lengths to suggest this bill is the end-all and be-all of meeting the problem of pollution and the dangers in respect of the ecology in the more northern reaches of Canada. I may wish to say something about these aspects of the minister's speech before I conclude my remarks. I should like to refer to one or two matters raised by the hon. member for Peace River. He raised a matter which is of concern when he made reference to the question of the islands of the Arctic archipelago. I thought,

either inadvertently or perhaps with a bit of ingenuity, he confused the question of internal and inland water in his discussion.

"Inland water" is a very specific term and "internal water" is also a specific term in respect of certain waters of Canada. One ought not to be confused with the other in any discussion we have in this House. To this extent, I must take issue with what I consider to be a rather specious argument advanced by the hon. member for Peace River in this connection. I do not suggest that the subject matter with which he was dealing is not an important one, and one of great concern to members of this House. But I suggest that the bill really is deficient in the sense that the proposed jurisdiction is restricted to the inland water of Canada. I suggest that the jurisdiction in this bill should be extended to include the internal waters of Canada. I think perhaps I may make reference to what I consider, in many ways, to be a companion bill, Bill C-144, even though at the moment it is being considered by a committee of this House.

If I understand it correctly, the proposed Canada water bill makes no similar restriction. It does not deal only with the inland water of Canada. It is a bill which concerns the management of the water resources of Canada. My understanding is that under the terms of the Canada water bill it would be possible for some management to be exercised over the internal water of Canada; in other words, the adjacent coastal areas of the country. It seems to me this is a point which certainly should be considered by the House. Already, on second reading, an amendment has been proposed. I do not think I could move at this stage an amendment to the amendment which would be in order. Certainly, however, this is a question which should be considered if this bill goes to the committee; that is, whether or not the bill should be expanded to include not only inland water but internal water.

I say this advisedly because what happens in respect of our adjacent coastal water may be just as important as what happens in respect of the water of our lakes and streams. The question of the management and control of the quality of this water may be very important to the ecology of the water, and to some of the other natural resources of the country, with particular reference perhaps to the fishery. I suppose I am particularly aware of this sort of thing as a result of living in a part of Canada where there is a close rela-