

Supply

are talking about basic principles, especially about a principle which would really place the coastal states in the position of managing all the living resources of the sea near their coasts. That kind of objective is the objective of the conference.

Mr. Lundrigan: Can the minister tell us about the policing of the northwest Atlantic? Will he tell us how many ships Canada has to police this area, which is about 500 miles one way and 1,000 miles the other, and where some 20 nations are fishing?

Mr. Davis: We have a large number of vessels, but as the hon. member well knows, very few are capable of going any great distance out to sea. Our new construction program is aimed at overcoming this deficiency. We do carry out overflights with aircraft, however.

Mr. McGrath: The minister reiterated that new ships are about to be built. What is he doing about the situation in which our naval patrol vessels only work an eight-hour day at the present time and tie up at five o'clock every day? He knows as well as I do that the principle infringements of our coastal waters take place after dark. What is he doing about the present ludicrous situation?

Mr. Davis: This is a problem which stems from union negotiations. Those craft are unionized. We have incurred additional costs so as to operate in other hours, and this has affected our budget very considerably. I meet this problem every time I go to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. It is chronic. We have had to spend a great deal more money to get other crews to operate at night. But the problem is one which we cannot dismiss lightly. It is built into the structure of the civil service.

Mr. Peters: We are dealing, now, with the estimates of the Department of the Environment. I am not prepared to argue whether or not the department of fisheries should logically be part of the Department of the Environment or whether it should be separate. It is true there has been a good deal of discussion on the subject.

Mr. Nielsen: It depends on whether the fish are fresh.

Mr. Peters: It depends on whether I come from a fishing area or not. For my part, I am not opposed to the establishment of a department of fisheries under a separate minister. I agree with those who come from the Maritimes that fishing is an industry of historic importance to our nation and that there ought to be a separate ministry under a responsible minister.

There has been little discussion of what the minister is actually doing to improve the environment. I notice we have been buying buses to serve Parliament Hill. The buses are run by petroleum and the waste products will cause pollution. Every member of this House, most Canadians in fact, drive to gas stations to fill up their cars and it works out that in at least one trip out of five they are buying gas, not to run the car but to run the pollution control device. These pollution control devices have become very expensive. All smart young people, those familiar with automobile engines, have found out how to override the control, thereby reducing gas consumption. However, this is not the field I am interested in discussing

[Mr. Davis.]

tonight. I wish to turn to the events which have taken place in the last few weeks and months in connection with the proposed James Bay development.

I regard it as unfortunate that attention is now being focused upon the rights of the Indians and the aboriginal claimants rather than upon the effect of the project upon the environment of the area. As far as I am concerned, ownership of the land constitutes an entirely different question. From an environmental viewpoint I could not care less whether the Indians own the land, whether Quebec owns it or whether Canada as a whole owns it. I should like to know whether the changes contemplated in the area are likely to have an adverse effect upon the environment. This question would remain to be answered no matter what was eventually decided about ownership provided, of course, the scheme went through. It might, of course, be advantageous. I have heard it said that it might cause the temperature in the region to rise five or ten degrees as a result of the creation of a large additional body of water. On the other hand, the bay is only some 15 feet deep at levels where it is fairly deep, and two or three feet at levels where it is shallow, and if the flow of water into the bay is restricted, what is presently James Bay may be only a river 10 or 15 years from now. The change might have a considerable effect upon the climate of that part of the north.

I am not suggesting for a moment that the question of ownership is not important. I am not saying that the federal government, which made an arrangement to give the whole of the land owned formerly by the Hudson Bay Company in that region to the province of Quebec, with certain conditions stipulated, is willing to live up to its end of the bargain. It seems to me they are almost as bad as the Queen, who never lived up to her bargain, because her relatives were running Rupert's Land for many years and she was not in a position to live up to it. Surely there should be an indication of what is to happen on the northern side of the James Bay area where there are deposits—

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Peters: May I call it ten o'clock?

Mr. MacLean: I am rising on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. It may be doomed to failure before I make it. I thought there might be a consensus in the committee that you should not see the clock for a little while, so that we might make some progress.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Peters: Ten o'clock.

Mr. Nielsen: On a further point of order, Mr. Chairman, since there does not appear to be unanimous consent to your not seeing the clock, might I suggest that the committee pass without debate, now, vote 5A relating to the Department of External Affairs, vote 12A relating to the Department of Finance and vote 1A relating to the Department of Justice.