

## INTERDEPARTMENTAL OIL POLLUTION DISASTER COMMITTEE

The Committee was unimpressed with efforts made to pinpoint the exact location of the Pan Arctic barge sinkings which might have permitted ascertaining any subsequent oil pollution and would have provided useful scientific data on the dissipation rate of substantial quantities of diesel fuel in low temperature water and more important, information on the effect of the oil on the marine life of the waters affected. The interdepartmental committee which was established by the Government, to deal with water pollution disasters after the Santa Barbara incident, did not bother to send a representative North to investigate the extent of the oil pollution resulting from the barge sinking. In your Committee's view, the attention which the interdepartmental oil pollution emergency committee gave to the barge sinking incident was totally inadequate and unsatisfactory.

## ARCTIC OIL POLLUTION DANGER

The Pan Arctic barge accident and the prospect of maritime oil tanker traffic through the Arctic opened by the *Manhattan* voyage underlines the need for a comprehensive research programme into the effects of oil pollution on the marine life of Canada's northern waters, as well as the ramifications which this pollution would have on the total Arctic environment and ecology.

Your Committee is of the opinion that there is a serious lack of knowledge, worldwide, as to the destructive effects of hydrocarbons and particularly as to the effect of hydrocarbon pollution in Arctic waters.

The Committee recommends that appropriate agencies of the Government move immediately to conduct research in the Arctic to gather information on the following:

- A) Physical properties of crude oils and other hydrocarbons in cold waters, the dynamics of their dispersion, and their persistence in water and on and under ice;
- B) The toxicity of various hydrocarbons to plant and animal life;
- C) Methods for control of oil spills, removal or neutralization of pollutants and destruction of pollutant cargoes in cases of marine disaster.

Your Committee also recommends continued research by the Department of Fisheries and Forestry to establish the extent of the fisheries potential of Arctic waters.

Your Committee additionally recommends, where practical and advantageous, joint action with other countries of the North Atlantic Community pursuant to a resolution of the North Atlantic Assembly dated October 22nd, to initiate:

- A) An operational research study to determine pollution safeguards to be required of oil tankers and pollutant-carrying maritime traffic in Arctic and North Atlantic waters;
- B) A research project into the effect of oil and other chemical pollutants on the marine biology and ecology of the cold waters of the Arctic and North Atlantic Oceans;
- C) A supporting programme aimed at developing improved methods combatting pollution in low temperature waters.