

*Adjournment Debate*

According to Sandy Lewis, a policy advisor with Environment Canada, the department wants to distance itself from any actual decision making. "We don't want to embarrass our minister," Lewis said, or "prejudice our view."

The Interdepartmental Environmental Review Committee is studying potential harbor sites along the Beaufort coast. The Northern Development Department is also examining Gulf's site selections, which include Roland Bay and King Point, as well as Stokes.

The article concludes as follows:

There is no reason the decision has to be made after the end of March, Lewis said.

Once it is made, he said, "we will have to live with it."

We have the National Energy Board ruling, we have the very lengthy, thorough and widely accepted Berger Inquiry, we have environmental groups and native groups which all support the exclusion of these lands. But, for years the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has been promoting Gulf's application to go ahead with Stokes Point, which I understand will be heard in Ottawa on Friday. It is interesting that not only is the impact on the national park proposal to be considered, but also the impact on aboriginal claims.

On February 25 the *Native Press* under the headline "Impact Statement ignores claims" ran a story by Lee Selleck. We have the erosion of good faith negotiations in relation to aboriginal title and we have the erosion of the park proposal. It is not that Gulf, Esso and others do not have other sites they could go to. On February 25 Gulf sent me a Telex which read in part as follows:

—Gulf's current proposal for a marine supply base at Stokes Point and the content of the environmental impact statement which outlines a range of long-term future options for eventual oil and gas development in the north, if and when sufficient commercial quantities are discovered.

The EIS will be dealt with more appropriately, as planned, during the course of the federal environmental assessment and review process.

● (1825)

We have a situation where Gulf, I understand under pressure from Government officials, went ahead and made an application to get Stokes Point. Their original idea was to get access to various quarries, to build a road down to join up with the Dempster, and to run pipelines down. Now all they are doing is shifting it back to a very narrow application and saying, "Don't harrass us. We just want to have a site where we can put 50 men. We will not bring in 767 jets; there will not be many helicopters. We will not do too much damage to the environment". However, by their own information, this is just the thin edge of the wedge. They want to get this limited site. They want to undermine aboriginal claims. They want to undermine the national park. Anyone in good conscience, including the Minister, has to admit that once that site is there, once Stokes Point is dredged as a deep water port, it will be a year-round facility. They will start pressuring for roads because they will say it is too foggy, that there are iceouts and whiteouts, that they cannot bring in the jet, that they must have a road. Once they get the road, they will say, "Well, we have the road; now we need the pipeline". As Dr. MacTaggart-Cowan said years ago about what is happening in the Arctic, it is destruction by insignificant increments.

I hope the Parliamentary Secretary will address himself to the very important application that is being made this week; Gulf is applying on Friday. The Minister's own Department claimed to have a legal opinion that Gulf can go ahead and get this kind of easement or temporary permit access to the area, without the need for a change in Order in Council which was based on reports which cost taxpayers of Canada millions of dollars, through the National Energy Board and through the Berger inquiry, to have those lands set aside. If the Minister intends to go ahead and allow Gulf to do it now, the Minister of the Environment might as well resign. He is opposed to it. His officials are opposed to it on sound environmental grounds. I urge the Parliamentary Secretary to agree with the Minister of the Environment, and to take the necessary steps to deal with this matter in an appropriate manner.

**Mr. Henri Tousignant (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I will try to explain the situation to the Hon. Member.

Gulf Oil has submitted an application for approval-in-principle to locate a medium to deep draft marine support base at Stokes Point in the Northern Yukon to support its offshore exploration activities, including its new drilling systems, the conical drilling unit and the mobile Arctic caisson. The company has conducted an analysis of alternative sites along the Beaufort coast and determined that Stokes Point was the best site to meet its exploration support needs.

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is not predisposed to locating a new marine supply base at Stokes Point or any other northern slope location. It is, however, obliged to assess Gulf's need for a new marine supply base during its exploration program and to respond to its application.

The Government, having granted Gulf exploration rights and specified work commitments associated therewith, cannot now impose unreasonable operating conditions and effectively limit Gulf's exercise of its rights. Consequently, departmental officials in co-operation with experts from other Departments are conducting a facilities siting study to assess a range of harbours on the entire Beaufort coast, including not only sites on the Yukon's north slope but also sites on the Northwest Territories coast, to determine both the need and the preferred location to meet Gulf's operational requirements during the exploration phase of its activities.

In this regard, Gulf has been informed that no decision can be taken until all significant factors have been analysed and weighed, that all sites must be considered in this analysis, that new sites should be kept to a minimum in order to limit potential disruptions, that such plans should be the subject of consultation with those affected, and that the provisions of the COPE agreement in principle are to be followed in all actions.

In November 1982, Gulf applied to conduct geotechnical studies at Stokes Point, Roland Bay and King Point, both onshore and offshore. Gulf has been authorized to proceed with such studies offshore, which will provide information essential to the analysis. Gulf is aware that such authorizations