

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

to the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants, I must say that Canadian policy, with regard to contracts awarded for the shipment of goods provided under the Canadian foreign aid program is regulated by a set of criteria established by CIDA. The standards apply to the procedure of payment for ocean shipping and insurance. Ocean shipping and insurance are contracted through Canadian brokers and forwarders. The shipment is made from Canadian ports.

In view of the limited number of Canadian ships registered in the Canadian merchant marine, it is very often impossible to use a Canadian ship for the shipment of those goods. The Canadian broker then makes arrangements to ship the supplies on any ship available, whatever its nationality. Therefore, I can only assert once again that shipments are made through Canadian brokers and on Canadian ships when the latter are available. In any case, the primary concern is to ensure delivery of the supplies in accordance with the time limit set for the execution of the project and to meet priority requirements of recipient countries.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—FISHERIES TREATY WITH
NORWAY—REQUEST FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS
TERMS

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Norway fishing and sealing agreements which were signed on July 15 of this year and tabled in the House of Commons on December 2, because someone other than the Canadian government had made them public have caused and will continue to cause much concern. I am glad that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) is in his place tonight to answer some questions. Members of Parliament from Canada's east coast appear to be upset because the agreement will permit Norway to take seals within Canadian territorial waters three miles from land.

Mr. McGrath: Shame.

Mrs. MacInnis: These members, and no doubt some other members across Canada, approve the annual seal slaughter. Their main concern is to keep a monopoly of it in this country. My concern is quite different. Along with a growing number of people, not only in Canada but throughout the world, I want to see this wholesale massacre eliminated. To the extent that this Canada-Norway agreement will protect the seal stocks of the Atlantic, as the Minister of the Environment claims it will, I think the agreement is a forward step.

Before I may be sure of that, I have a number of questions that I wish to ask. That is why I pressed the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) to say whether or not the government will give us an opportunity to debate the terms of the agreement in Parliament before it is ratified. From his reply I have gathered that we will not get this chance. Therefore, I must ask a few questions tonight. The rest will have to wait for a later occasion.

Is the Minister of the Environment satisfied that this agreement will save the harp seal population from extinction? I have seen estimates showing that the number of harp seals in the gulf and in the front were cut sharply

[Mr. Isabelle.]

from 3½ million in 1950 to 1½ million in 1970, a reduction of over 50 per cent in 20 years. At least one marine biologist has warned that the species will be extinct in 12 years' time if the present rate of kill is maintained. What is to prevent the harp seal going the same route as the now extinct sea otter, the passenger pigeon or any one of the other 66 gravely endangered species listed by the Canadian Wildlife Federation?

The Canadian Wildlife Federation is a non-profit organization and therefore capable of a judgment uncoloured by the desire to kill these creatures for monetary gain. Is the name of its representative among those of the Canadian delegates to the Canada-Norway negotiations which took place in Ottawa last April and which led to the fishing agreement in July? It is not. Eight of the twelve names are those of federal government departmental officials. The ninth comes from the Fisheries Council of Canada, an industry-oriented organization. The tenth is a director of a Canadian subsidiary of a New York fur importing company. Between them, parent and subsidiary take Canadian seal skins or products to Norway and the United States. The last two names represent a sealing vessel firm operating out of Halifax, one of these men, I am told, being the Norwegian consul for the port of Halifax.

In view of such heavy representation of sealing interests on the body which negotiated the Canada-Norway agreement, is it any wonder that people have misgivings about the value of that agreement as a conservation measure? Similar questions arise in the memo issued last May by the World Federation for the Protection of Animals, the headquarters of which are in Zurich, Switzerland. The memo was sent to the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries and was on the subject of seal killing. It emphasized that the harp seal appears to be in grave danger of not surviving just at the time when its value to the regional ecology is being established. If a greatly reduced quota for seal killing is introduced, the viability of commercial sealing will be threatened in any case. The memo concludes:

Sealing has not been justified on statistical, commercial, ecological nor any other grounds—Sealing only produces products for which synthetic alternatives are available—It has clearly become an unacceptable anachronism and should be ended.

I repeat, this is the opinion of an international body, the World Federation for the Protection of Animals, with headquarters at Zurich, Switzerland. I conclude by again expressing my conviction that a debate on this whole matter in Parliament is long overdue. Not only the citizens of Canada but people all over the world are concerned about protecting the ecology and the wildlife that makes human life possible.

• (10:10 p.m.)

This matter has many facets. I have touched on only one this evening. There are others, perhaps on the east coast of Canada, that are also interesting. Members who represent that area should have a right to bring out the facts in this matter. We should air all angles of this subject before it is finally settled. This is a matter of great concern to Canadians. I see no reason why we should not have an opportunity to give it a very thorough investigation before this treaty is finally ratified.