

vessels of a kind which comply with safety standards. I may be wrong but I would think most of the traffic engaged in carrying oil close to Canadian shores would be originating from or proceeding to ports in the United States. If the wealthiest nation in the world cannot agree readily to ensure that all its shipping using waters less than 100 miles from our shores should comply with the standards proposed in this bill, then, surely, we should be able to shame them into doing so.

There is one other question which I believe the committee should consider, though it may not be so directly related to the terms of the bill we are discussing. I refer to the whole question of establishing what I would call a marine brigade for pollution protection and prevention, since the success of the legislation we are considering obviously depends to a great extent upon the effectiveness of such a course. Full weight should be given to the recommendation of the task force in this connection. The idea that provision should be made for fire protection and prevention at the municipal level has won long-standing acceptance; it should certainly be paralleled in the light of the evidence brought forward in the task force report. So far we have been lax in this respect.

The report makes special reference, as did the minister in his speech, to the part played by the armed forces of our country in the effort in connection with the *Arrow*, and, in addition, to the role of the armed forces in providing rescue teams ready for future emergencies. I noted particularly the reference in the report to the services performed by H.M.C.S. *Cape Scott* and H.M.C.S. *Cape Breton*. The task force recommended that these ships be maintained in a state of operational readiness to fulfil primary roles in the national contingency plan. This reference arises from the possibility that the Department of National Defence might withdraw these vessels from active service, having decided to pursue a different line of policy. This underlines a point which should be considered in committee. To what extent, in the long run, can we rely upon national defence forces when it is necessary to move rapidly to deal with pollution?

Any Minister of National Defence and his policy planners are, naturally, thinking primarily in terms of another kind of defence role. This shapes the direction in which they allocate their funds, train their troops and specifies the kind of equipment they acquire and operate. I put it to the Minister of Transport that we are entitled to detailed evidence showing the extent to which ships of the type I have named do, in fact, meet the requirements of situations with which the bill before us proposes to deal; we should be given the opportunity to assess, in committee, whether or not ships carrying suitable equipment should be available on a permanent stand-by basis for use by the coastguard service in emergencies. It is designed to provide rescue services, but at the present time the Canadian Coast Guard is not adequately equipped to perform the pollution prevention function. I remember once remarking to the hon. member who was minister of transport in the regime of the Conservative government that you could not build a coast guard simply by slapping a fresh coat of paint on a bunch of old vessels. The minister of that day assured me that that

Canada Shipping Act

was not all that was going to be done. While I am willing to concede that we have done a little more than simply repaint the old DOT fleet, we have not really done very much more.

• (3:40 p.m.)

In assessing this whole question of providing adequate protection against the disaster of oil pollution, I suggest that we have an opportunity to take a fresh look at what might be created in the way of an efficient, mobile, well organized and well equipped Canadian coast guard, one that would perform a number of roles in protecting the sea coasts of Canada for those people who use them and also protecting our natural life—the ecology, as we call it—of our sea coast areas.

These are some of the considerations that come to my mind on looking through the bill before the House, and I have outlined some of the subject matters that should be considered in depth by the committee. I think all of us so far have indicated that we are prepared to see the bill receive second reading and be sent to committee with our hopeful blessing. Some of us hope that when the bill emerges from the committee and returns to the House, it will in fact be a better bill than it is in its present form.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of extending unduly my remarks on Bill C-2 which, I think, is of some importance since it deals with problems of world interest, namely, the pollution of oceans or streams by waste discharged into them or by ships carrying oil especially.

As regards Canada, we have, I think, only two merchant ships left. All transoceanic cargo is conveyed by foreign ships which bring gasoline or oil to Canada and it is normal that the Canadian Parliament should take measures so as to stop water pollution.

Last year, explorations were conducted in the North in order to discover oil or natural gas fields and Indians and Eskimos are complaining that many rivers of that area are already polluted.

We heard recently that the water of James Bay and Hudson Bay, to important fresh water sources, are beginning to be polluted, and the government has done nothing to stop pollution there.

For instance, so far as James Bay is concerned, one puts the blame on shipowners, the pulp industry, Domtar and other companies, because they pour their waste products into rivers like the Bell River, the Harricanaw River whose waters are going to pollute further James Bay.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-2 is a very important one. It should not be used to protect industries, and to enable them to save millions of dollars at the risk of polluting Canadian waters.

Pollution exists not only in our region. The Ottawa river, a real jewel, which is even larger than any one in Europe, and which is extremely beautiful, is polluted. By