

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

The Massachusetts enactment purports to extend the jurisdiction of the state off its coast for the purpose of the management of the fishery resources to 200 miles or 100 fathoms, whichever is the greater. It is of interest as reflecting the attitude of one American state on the importance of the Law of the Sea matters. Enforcement of this legislation would, I believe, involve certain constitutional questions in the United States upon which it would be inappropriate for me to comment. It should be noted, however, that the United States government continues to claim and enforce only a three-mile territorial sea and a further nine-mile fishing zone.

With respect to further development of the Law of the Sea by international agreement, the United States government has indicated that it would support a maximum 12-mile limit for the territorial sea and/or fishing zone, with provision being made for some preferential rights for coastal states in fishing resources beyond 12 miles.

The Canadian government has been pressing, particularly in the context of the forthcoming Law of the Sea conference, to achieve international agreement on the management of coastal fisheries beyond the limits of the territorial sea and exclusive fishing zones. Canada is seeking to obtain recognition of the coastal states' right to manage coastal fisheries for conservation purposes and to reserve for its fishermen a preferential share of those species which are vital to its coastal population.

Mr. McGrath: By the time the government begins to act there will be no fishery left.

POWER—PROPOSED JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT—REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION OF REPORT ON ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, on October 29 I asked the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) whether he would make public the survey which his department is conducting into the ecological effects on northeastern Quebec and Ontario which would result from the proposed power project which the government of Quebec is planning for the James Bay area. The reply of the minister was somewhat evasive. He said if the studies were ready he might make them public or available to interested environmental groups. What is involved here is probably the largest project of its kind ever attempted on the North American continent. Half a dozen or more rivers are to be diverted, huge dams are to be built, an ocean port constructed, thousands of square miles of trees are to be cleared and billions of dollars are to be expended in order to produce electric power, a large part of which will be sold to the United States.

Some of the most eminent scientists in the employ of the government and some of the people most actively interested in the problems of environment have questioned the whole concept. They have pressed the government of Canada not to permit this tremendous project to go ahead with such breakneck speed until some of the very important questions of its effects are assessed. We know from experience the very bad effects which followed the building of the Bennett Dam. We know of some of the bad results of the building of the Aswan Dam in Egypt.

[Mr. Corbin.]

The Canadian government, which has repeatedly said we must be concerned about the problems of the environment, is saying virtually nothing in this case. In connection with the proposed trans-Alaskan pipeline and tanker route down the British Columbia coast, the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Sharp) said in this House on May 4:

It is time to ensure that the protection of our natural heritage becomes a major priority of public policy—

Large new engineering projects should not be undertaken before adequate information is available on the environmental risks which would be entailed.

This is precisely the question which we ought to be asking ourselves about the project with which the Quebec government is going ahead. This project will have an effect on the people of Quebec, a possible effect on the climate of Hudson Bay as well as an effect on people of northern Ontario and northern Manitoba. The whole ice floe in the Hudson Bay may be affected. The operation of the port of Churchill in Manitoba may be completely disrupted.

Dr. Lloyd M. Dickie, of the Bedford Institute at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, one of Canada's top scientists, recently warned that man-made projects such as the James Bay project may alter our climate. He pointed out that the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Gaspé climate has warmed by seven degrees since the St. Lawrence Seaway has been built. He predicts the opposite will happen if the James Bay project continues unaltered.

We are talking about an area which is of vital importance to the wildlife of the North American continent. This is one of the major areas for wild geese flight and the trapping of beaver. Close to 10,000 Indians who live in the area have vigorously protested against this project. This does not mean we ought not to go ahead with the project, but surely in light of the effects of the Bennett Dam on the Indian who lived behind it, the Department of Indian Affairs as well as the Department of the Environment should be expressing concern. They should be looking at the situation and protecting the Indians in the area.

• (10:10 p.m.)

Instead, what we find is the same kind of indifference, the same kind of silence as was encountered while the Bennett Dam was being built, and the effects will be a disaster of the kind that followed the building of the Bennett Dam. I urge the government to abandon its policy of silence and tell the people of Canada what, if anything, it has learned as a result of its studies of the damming of a number of rivers and the building of very high dams.

Mr. Judd Buchanan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the first part of the question dealt with the environmental aspect and I would like to deal with its first.

In August, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) agreed with the competent authorities in Quebec to set up an informal task force composed of experts drawn from Environment-Canada and various provincial departments. The task force would make a preliminary evaluation of the impact of the project on the environment, evaluate the relative importance and sensitivities of the various elements of the ecosystem that will be affected,