

*Pilotage Act***POLLUTION****PRESENCE OF MERCURY IN INDIANS—LINK TO DOMTAR PLANT AT LEBEL-SUR-QUÉVILLON**

Mr. Ralph Stewart (Cochrane): My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Can the minister inform the House whether a definite link has been established between the high levels of mercury in the Indian population and the mercury contaminated effluent of the Domtar plant at Lebel-sur-Quévillon?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): There has been no such link established, Mr. Speaker. The Indians who were brought to Montreal for observation were not found to have a serious sickness caused by mercury. They had been eating fish from watersheds other than those into which Domtar discharges its effluent.

Mr. Stewart (Cochrane): Can the minister state if the Domtar plant has now complied with federal standards in its mercury output into local waters?

Mr. Davis: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

• (12:30 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**PILOTAGE ACT****MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOTAGE AUTHORITIES AS PROPRIETARY CORPORATIONS**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-246, respecting pilotage, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni) moved:

That Bill C-246, respecting pilotage, be amended by adding to Clause 15 at page 13 immediately after subclause (7) the following:

"(8) A pilotage certificate shall be valid for use by the holder thereof only on ships of Canadian registry".

He said: Mr. Speaker, the amendment I have proposed to this bill is not likely to receive widespread attention in the press, particularly in view of the events that are scheduled to take place later today. Before I get into the substance of my amendment, I would like to suggest that in these days when we are increasingly concerned about the ecological health of our country and the world, this legislation is very important to us all.

After having undergone one of the most strenuous committee sessions that I have ever attended, I remarked that this bill does not have very much political sex appeal. None the less, the work that was done in the standing committee on this bill was a very worthwhile exercise. We were dealing with a very complex piece of legislation on a subject which does not come to the

[Mr. Basford.]

attention of Members of Parliament very often. We worked hard trying to understand the complexities of the bill and did what we could to improve it. This is indicated by the fact that a number of amendments were written into the original draft by the committee.

Those who were most concerned about the bill, particularly the pilots who were very assiduous in their attendances at the hearings, were by and large very happy with the results of the work of the committee. They expressed themselves quite freely in that context. However, it was unfortunate that, because of a rather irrelevant clause in this bill, irrelevant in the context of the total package which has to do with legislation due to expire June 30, the committee hearings were rushed and the pressures under which we worked were rather extreme for a bill of this complexity.

My assessment of what happened in the committee with regard to the total picture of what is proposed in the bill, is that there appears to be one defect that is worthy of consideration. For that reason, I placed this amendment on the order paper for discussion. The amendment reads:

A pilotage certificate shall be valid for use by the holder thereof only on ships of Canadian registry.

To put this amendment in context, it is necessary to appreciate the main purpose of the bill. It provides for a new concept of semi-autonomous regional pilotage authorities which will be responsible for most of the administrative work of the pilotage service in their respective regions. Clause 12 clearly states that the central purpose of the bill is to have the pilotage authorities operate an efficient pilotage service in the interests of safety. This is the over-riding consideration in the whole matter of having a pilotage service. It is central to consideration of my amendment and, indeed, almost any other proposal in the bill. It is with the object of raising certain questions as to the adequacy of the bill with regard to the matter of safety that I would like to discuss certain provisions of the bill at this stage.

The bill provides, and this is most important and certainly central to my amendment, that in effect there are to be two classes of people who will be empowered to have responsibility for piloting ships in the compulsory pilotage areas in Canadian waters which will be established under the bill. There are the people who are in our present pilotage service, the people we normally refer to as pilots. There is provision for granting pilotage certificates to officers of certain ships. I do not quarrel with this basic concept. It is not because of any quarrel with this proposal that I have introduced my amendment. I am sure the minister and, more particularly, his parliamentary secretary who sat in on the committee meetings, will recognize that a great deal of discussion in the committee centered around who should be the holders of pilotage certificates and under what circumstances.

Indeed, the committee did propose a number of amendments designed to clarify the question who should receive pilotage certificates. The committee wrote a provision into clause 14 that the holders of such certi-