

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act

clearance, and whose plans have not been approved, is suddenly discovered in the Arctic. What shall we do? Shall we send an icebreaker after it with a gun?

Mr. Benjamin: That seems to fit the government's thinking.

Mr. Otto: Can you imagine the case, at 2½ miles an hour. The ships will be almost like turtles going through the ice.

Mr. Benjamin: We might be able to stop the other ships that way.

Mr. Otto: Hon. gentlemen opposite are laughing. But do I not portray a rather ridiculous scene? How are we to patrol these waters and enforce the law?

An hon. Member: Let the minister pull the trigger.

Mr. Otto: I wish the minister would answer these questions, in order to give us an idea whether this bill constitutes merely a declaration of sovereignty. If it does, I submit it will not serve much purpose. If the bill has a definite purpose, then we should understand clearly how it will be administered. How is the law to be enforced, not in those cases where everything is done legally, but in those cases where there is an infraction of the law. How do we enforce it? We may not wish to be nationalistic in the enforcement of this law; but how will we make an individual shipowner who does not wish to go through all the rigmarole involved, and who may not wish to spend money repairing his ship and putting it into proper condition for the Arctic, obey this law?

Mr. Benjamin: We tell him he cannot go, and that is all.

Mr. Otto: I think that amendments such as the one we are considering will, if accepted, do more harm than good. I think it is better to consider these matters as the need arises. The preamble of the bill alludes to research. If we ask agencies of the government and our universities to undertake research, the Governor in Council and the minister would need to authorize the spending of money. I suggest that the conditions under which such work is to be undertaken could be spelled out in the regulations on the basis of knowledge that is acquired by appropriate departments of government without the necessity of the amendment.

[Mr. Otto.]

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to speak to the amendment now before the House. I certainly endorse it. I think we should include in the act provisions which would allow continuing programs of research to be directed to furthering the objects of the act, which deals primarily with our Arctic areas. I disagree with the previous speaker, who suggested that this aspect of research is included in the bill. He talked about regulations. Regulations can be made and changed, without doubt. Unquestionably, if the need for such research were to be spelled out in the act itself, that research would go forward.

We have heard about the research into oil pollution problems being undertaken in Canada today, and some research is currently being carried out on the east coast of Canada as a result of the unfortunate sinking of the *Arrow*. It is tragic that there should be an oil spill off our east coast before this type of research is thought to be necessary and is carried out. It could have been and should have been undertaken long ago, because oil pollution is one type of pollution in particular that we need to prevent. May I point out that pollution of any type in the Arctic brings a far more serious threat to both the ecology and wildlife of the area than does pollution in the temperate zone.

On August 14, 1969, Dr. Richard E. Warner of the Memorial University of Newfoundland presented a brief on the environmental effects of oil pollution in Canada, and this brief shows excellent reasons why amendments such as this one ought to be included in the act. One of his fields of study has been the Arctic, and we need only look at some of the pages of this fine report to realize just how serious are the potential oil pollution problems of our Arctic areas. May I put on record some of the points he has raised in his brief to show how desperately needed is a great deal of research, and how oil spills in the Arctic will affect our ecology? Oil spills will affect not only the Arctic, but all of northern Canada drastically. In the bottom paragraph on page 12, he talks of the extreme urgency of precautions being taken against oil pollution hazards in the Canadian Arctic, and then says:

The *Toronto Globe and Mail* recently reported (16 July 1969) that the first of a proposed series of 15 exploratory wells on Melville Island being drilled by Panarctic Oils Ltd. of Calgary, had suffered a gas blowout (from a split in the casing) about midnight of Sunday, 13 July and had been out of control ever since.