

taken; I see loopholes in the legislation already. The point is that together with other nations we are getting started in an attempt to protect the oceans against undue pollution.

The hon. member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Clark) made the point that emergencies might arise at sea in circumstances in which a person in charge of a vessel might have to carry out dumping in the absence of a permit, or without making the required report. I would remind the hon. member that such a situation is covered in clause 8 of the bill. The descriptive word used in the marginal note is "Emergencies". It says that notwithstanding what is contained in subclause (4)(1) dumping may be carried out without a permit if it is necessary to avert danger to human life at sea or to any ship or aircraft. So the emergencies are covered. The clause goes on to circumscribe the permission which is given, but it strikes me from a quick reading of the bill that an attempt has been made to put forward legislation which will at least constitute a start in this important field.

It is also said we should not be expected, as a country with a great deal of interest in the ocean, to take all the responsibility; that others will have to work with us. That is true. But what is involved is the carrying through of a purpose. We signed the Oslo Convention on December 29, 1972, and I would say that if even 15 nations of the world are prepared to take steps to protect the oceans against undue pollution we should be part of that effort. The leadership we can give in this field is important, and it is the kind of thing Canadians want to do.

I listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Rocky Mountain about the question of which minister is to be in charge of the legislation we are considering. I agree with him that it ought to be the Minister of the Environment. I agree that the clout of the Department of the Environment should be strengthened, and I hope this will be the decision eventually reached. I have to say, though, that I am not scandalized by the fact the bill does not name a particular minister as minister in charge of the act, but leaves it to be decided later. I say this because I have seen similar provisions in a number of bills; in other words, some latitude is given to the government to make a decision.

I agree with the hon. member for Rocky Mountain that it should not be a minister who might be involved in a conflict of interest and who might therefore play down concern over the environment because of some commercial consideration. Perhaps the minister chosen could be someone like the Secretary of State for External Affairs; I can see the holder of that office as a possible minister in charge rather than, say, the Minister of Transport within whose department a conflict of interest might easily arise. In any case, the matter has not been resolved against the Minister of the Environment—the wording is set out in subclause (2)(1).

I do not agree with everything the hon. member for Rocky Mountain said, but I join with him in expressing the hope that added strength will be given to the Department of the Environment. There is no use this department becoming just a hanger-on, one which gets into the picture now and then. Preservation of our environment is one of the most important issues facing us in the latter part of

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the 20th century. It is terribly important to the 21st century, and the sooner we build up this department and give it the strength and authority to enable it to make effective decisions concerning our environment regardless of commercial considerations, the better it will be for all concerned.

I am the last to suggest the bill is perfect or that it does not need to be carefully considered in committee with the officials present, but participating with other countries in the world in an attempt to protect the seas around us is a good and an important endeavour and I should like to see second reading given to the bill fairly soon so that it may be sent to the appropriate standing committee.

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that the first two speakers representing the official opposition come from the province of Alberta which is a land-locked province. This is a fact which I believe underscores the importance of the bill before us, one which goes far beyond the superficial idea that it is of concern only to the provinces which border our seas.

We shall be hearing tonight from a representative of our party from British Columbia, and undoubtedly he will speak out of his concern for the protection of the coastline of that province. But it is particularly important for us to understand the final sentence spoken by the parliamentary secretary in introducing this bill when reluctantly, it seemed to me, he came round to a recognition that anti-dumping legislation affecting the high seas and the seas adjacent to Canada is connected with the whole issue of the pollution of a common heritage of mankind. This places the bill in a far larger context than that of unilateral action taken by Canada, or even of Canada becoming a signatory to a convention. This bill has far wider ramifications than anti-dumping, and that is why I pleaded with him at the conclusion of his remarks and criticized him for stopping short in his speech.

● (2120)

What the world is concerned about today in regard to our seas is not simply anti-dumping legislation, however important that be for the protection of this part of our environment that covers four-fifths of the surface of the globe. What is of concern to the world today is the total management of the seas.

As we examine this bill we read that the measure will provide for the control of dumping waste and other substances in the ocean; for the establishment of a board of review consisting of not more than three persons; that it will provide that the federal Crown is bound by the measure; for fines in contravention thereof in the amounts prescribed; and for costs of the federal Crown to repair or remedy any condition or to mitigate any damage, and for their recovery.

In implementing this recommendation contained in the bill, I ask how we can expect other nations of the world that have access to the high seas, and whose vessels pass within 200 miles of our shores, to observe our rights if we do not indicate today that we are concerned with the common rights of mankind which are currently under examination at the Law of the Sea conference? I am