

Pollution Control

Memorial University, a marine biologist, to advise generally and to assist in particular with the clean-up measures that will be required. The Canadian Coastguard has ships at the scene as well as helicopters together with those of the armed forces. Chartered aircraft have flown equipment and materials from various parts of the continent. No effort is being spared to contain the spill and to destroy the ship and its cargo with the least possible harm to the environment.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, there can be no question from the report the minister has given that the situation is very serious as far as its effect on fishlife is concerned, and potentially very serious as far as the environment is concerned. I do not think there can be any question either that there has been a good deal of complacency, from which I hope this disaster will awaken all of us and incite us to make the arrangements necessary to avoid this kind of tragedy in the future to the extent that that is possible and, to the extent it is not possible, will incite us to make the necessary arrangements to be in a position to act effectively. We have not really taken any measures to prevent this sort of thing happening in our own territorial waters, and I would judge that we are not effectively organized to fight it when it does occur.

Again, I am a little confused by the minister's statement in connection with the forward section of the vessel being sealed off so it will not leak when moved off the ledge of rock on which it is now resting. I am confused why it is not possible also to tow this part, the forward section, out to sea if it can be removed from the rock.

Furthermore, I am concerned about why the decision was not taken earlier, first, as to the destruction of the vessel and, second, as to controlled burning. Oil has been escaping over a wide area of water for some time. If it is possible to apply controlled burning either tomorrow or the next day, then many people are going to wonder why it was not possible to apply controlled burning once the oil started to leak in any serious quantity.

It is clear that there is uncertainty as to methods. Here again I believe we have been complacent. There is obviously a need for a good deal of research in connection with this kind of disaster. In particular I believe we need controls for the future within our own territorial waters.

The minister gave the impression the other day that we were limited and restricted in

[Mr. Jamieson.]

this regard because of the lack of international regulations. With all respect, it would seem to me that we are free to apply controls within our own territorial waters. These we should certainly have without delay. The damage is serious and on the basis of what the minister has outlined and admitted the results are very uncertain. As a consequence of the delay this area may suffer a most serious disaster.

So the lesson is that we must be better prepared for this sort of thing when it happens than the government was on this occasion. We must implement regulations which will minimize the possibility of this kind of thing happening. We want some continuing assurance from the minister that every effort will be made—not simply the minister saying every effort is being made—even at this late date to minimize the danger. I think the minister, with respect, ought to remove what seems to me to be some confusion in his statement.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, we are glad to have the statement from the Minister of Transport regarding the wrecking of the tanker *Arrow* off the coast of Cape Breton Island. I recognize that there are a great many technical problems involved in dealing with this matter, but I must say it seems to me it has taken an unconscionable length of time to deal with it and to see that the ship or at least part of the ship was towed out to sea and destroyed.

I believe that what has happened in this particularly unfortunate incident calls for a very thorough study and some action by the government to deal with what will undoubtedly be a recurring problem in this country. More and more oil tankers of larger and larger size are going to be used in the transport of oil. The Canadian people are properly exercised about the problem of pollution. It is bad enough that we have to deal with industries which discharge effluent into coastal waters, but if our shores are to be polluted by tankers which either discharge their cargo or are wrecked, then we are going to face a very serious problem, indeed, in terms of pollution of our coastline.

This is why there is so much concern about the proposed second trip of the *Manhattan*, because it is one of the largest tankers in the world. After its last trip it was reported that it had two large gaping holes in it. Had it been carrying a cargo of oil this would have created a real problem.