

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Bill

ments in the past and to insist on the users of all areas in Canada's Arctic between the 60th meridian and the 141st meridian and up to the North Pole obtaining permission to use these areas, or indeed, as was the policy in 1925, to require a licence.

The Prime Minister should take the earliest opportunity to make a strong and positive statement which would clear the air of any doubt as to Canada's claim of sovereignty over the whole of the Arctic archipelago. He is not doing it by the introduction of this kind of legislation which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) was quite right in describing as only raising further doubts. If, as the Secretary of State for External Affairs said, we have sovereignty over all of these waters which are considered internal Canadian waters, why then must we advance legislation in this House which restricts that sovereignty to 12 miles or 100 miles, whichever way you look at it? We do not need legislation to restrict our sovereignty, as the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (Mr. Allmand) put it so well. We need not say anything about our sovereignty. We own the Arctic Islands and that is all there is to it. We own the whole of the area between the 60th meridian and 141st meridian and up to the North Pole. That was the policy and that should continue to be the policy, and the Prime Minister should say so.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. F. J. Bigg (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, the bill before the House is an important one. It is only a few weeks ago that I recommended immediate action with regard to international co-operation in pollution control. Little if anything was done, not that I expected it to be done because I spoke, but events of history have proved with dramatic suddenness how urgent the international problem has become. I do not think that we should be bogged down in semantics. I do not think the problem is whether, in fact, we have the necessary armed forces to go up to Canada's Arctic Islands and maintain the old style physical control over all those islands.

• (2:30 p.m.)

I should have thought that by now we were becoming mature in world affairs. I do not refer to Canada alone, but hopefully the whole world is becoming mature in this day of trips to the moon and international co-operation. But here we are again, apparently bogging down in semantics. It seems to me we

[Mr. Nielsen.]

are not taking a big enough view individually, as political parties, as a nation, and certainly not as international brothers.

With respect to the problem of pollution and the handling of it from a very high level, it is obviously out of Canada's control. The problem may well become nothing but an international political football in a big power game. I have in my hand a letter I received from the U.S. Information Service. I presume it has all the validity of the U.S. State Department behind it. I have no reason to believe it is not an official document. It is datelined Washington, April 15, so is not ancient history. Part of it reads:

Following is the text of a Dept. of State's statement on the government of Canada's bills on limits of the territorial sea, fisheries and pollution.

They lump the two bills together, C-202 and C-203, and it is very hard to discuss one without thinking about the other. I am certainly not anti-American. On the contrary, I look to the United States very strongly and sensibly for assistance, not only in the preservation of our own identity as an independent nation but in continuing to develop what has been loosely called our western way of life. Whether the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux), the government in general, or Parliament itself states that these islands are ours, I am not sure is important. The important thing is to discuss the matter openly and in a friendly manner, not only with the Americans but with the international people the Americans themselves suggest should be consulted.

It is difficult to discuss this matter without taking an historical look at it. I wonder how the State Department's suggestion that all things should be done on an international basis and settled by international agreement—I go along with that at this stage of my argument because I think ideally we should have international agreement—fits in with the Munroe doctrine under which the whole world is supposed to leave the Americas alone? I wonder what the Organization of American States would have to say in reply to a document coming from one of the other power groups of the world, telling any independent nation or so-called independent nation how it should behave?

I am not saying that the Americans should not have issued this release, but it is obvious that they are attacking the matter from a very selfish point of view. The Eskimo people are willing Canadians. I have heard no state-