

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Bill

mally accept. We do not want to get involved in military engagements in order to preserve our own unity and integrity but the fact that military personnel are there and that we look north gives some substance to the ideas about security. Sovereignty is something which we have to declare for ourselves. It comes from the establishment of straight baselines and the declaration of everything within them as inland waters, from a declaration that anybody who moves in there does so through our grace and decision. It is not a matter of open right as is the case with respect to international waters. Sovereignty must first be declared and then secured if the need arises.

● (12:10 p.m.)

The matters of ecological balance and the economic development of the north are also two major reasons why we should be proceeding with legislation of this type. The population of the Northwest Territories is only 30,000 to 35,000 people and is widely scattered. The communities are small and most have no economic base whatever, so the economic development of the north will be concentrated in a few areas. In the north, as elsewhere, we find that development often hinges almost exclusively on the production of raw materials and does not take into consideration development that might revolve around processing operations, manufacturing, or secondary industries that might derive from future development of natural resources. The development should not be based only on an extractive industry from which the raw materials have to be transported to the southern regions of Canada or, worse still, to other countries for processing. We must embark upon a program for the fullest possible development of these resources as close to the production site as possible, not just extract ore, reduce it to mineral concentrate to be exported for processing and thus deprive local people of jobs. This is the sort of economic activity we want to see taking place.

I notice that the minister, in his statement about the economic development of the north as one of our primary interests, did not outline any other type of economic development that he had in mind for the area.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the hon. member a question. Is he aware that in the agreement which we signed with Anvil Mining in Yukon we put a lot of pressure on them to have a smelter there and that we will have to reconsider the situation a few years from now? It is a very important part

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

of the agreement that the aim of the government is to have more processing in the area rather than just export the concentrate.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am familiar with the program with respect to Anvil Mining Corporation. What I am putting on the record now is in support of the government's position about Arctic sovereignty and the economic development involved in it. But in order to give some cognizance to the integrity of the people there, we must go full scale into the program of further processing.

In passing, Mr. Speaker, I would mention that while the minister referred to the economic development of the north in the second paragraph of his speech, he did not expand beyond that. I think this should be spelled out so that other countries would know of our concern with this problem as well as with the all-important problem of pollution.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I should like to inform the hon. member that I shall be making a speech on Monday at Portland, Oregon and I shall touch on the point he has mentioned.

An hon. Member: Don't touch on it, really hit it.

Mr. Chrétien: I am a polite man.

An hon. Member: Sock it to them.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): If the hon. Minister would like to give my regards to some friends of mine in Portland and give me the credit line, I would not mind that too much.

There is no question, Mr. Speaker, about our concern with pollution control and many speeches have been made about it in this House. We have dealt with the need for control of our environment, the need for reducing and eliminating pollution. More than at any other time in the history of the world, we are perilously close to the extinction of life as we know it if we continue to pollute air, land and water. This appears to be the opinion of many ecologists and biologists, and some believe that it may happen within two or three generations. They say the devastating effects of pollution are worse than the prospect of nuclear war, yet it goes uncontrolled and ignored by many sections of the economy. There is no necessity to become involved in discussions about the need for pollution control, and this is another reason we endorse what the government has presented in this bill.