that I whole-heartedly endorse virtually everything in the report and I commend it to the government in the hope they will be able to get on with it in the immediate future. Even a casual scanning of the efforts of other maritime nations with good mineral potentials off their coasts reveals the total inadequacies of our own efforts to date.

With a continental shelf covering some one and a half million square miles, almost half of our total land area, this failure to vigorously investigate is almost alien to our pioneering spirit and heritage. If I may be permitted, I will quote very briefly from the summary of the report of Science Council of Canada at page 7:

> Recent events have clearly indicated the urgent need to develop a sound national policy for the marine area. Challenges and opportunities exist which, if neglected by Canadians will be seized by others . . . The time for action is now.
>
> To meet these challenges . . . there is a need for a national program, a Major Program in Marine Science and Technology—

While other nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Russia and others are well into research and development programs, Canada seems content only to look for gas and oil, and that, until very recently, in only a minor way. One wonders if the current difficulties over federal versus provincial jurisdiction has been part of the cause. If so, Ottawa should settle with the provinces concerned now, before some of our offshore exploration for oil starts paying off with production and the resulting landgrab starts. There is need for, and room to, compromise on the part of the federal government in this area. The Prime Minister has already recognized this. A little over a year ago he admitted that there might be distinctions in law between the east and west coasts and, as well, between the coastal provinces and those in between.

Perhaps the point of resolving the question at the earliest time becomes clearer when viewed in terms of economic loss brought about by the continuing confusion in law. Whatever we do, it must be done soon and in a manner most likely to appeal to those who would investigate and develop the potential that we all believe is there.

A second, the apparent urgent need is to ensure that we protect the highly vulnerable sea environment. The clear message of Mr. D. G. Crosby, Canadian delegate to the United Nations special committee on the seabed reads:

> We have in many parts of the world now reached a stage on land where in the relatively near future, according to some eminent scientists, we may actually reach the irreversible stage as regards the pollution of our environment.
>
> Let us not make the same mistake with respect to the even more vulnerable environment of our seas and oceans.

With the experience of the *Arrow* in Chedabucto Bay we have taken a significant lead in pollution, its control, the costs to ecology, the legal implications and, hopefully, prevention. We should continue to press for rigid safeguards, but in a form that will encourage orderly scientific exploration, and protect the seas from the reality of pollution as it is with us on land.

The passage of laws or acceptance of standards at the international level, can work two ways. They can be such as to make safe exploration and subsequent exploitation possible or they can be excessive in either their restrictions or freedoms. Only when we establish firm policies and goals of our own will we be able to safely enjoy the rich rewards of the sea environment. Countries like Saudi Arabia have taken great initiatives. They have already claimed exclusive mineral exploitation rights beyond the limits of the continental shelf. We know of the sulphur, iron, manganese and the other hard minerals that are being mined all over the world, such as tin, for example.

Studies made to date of the resources other than oil reveal a wide range of minerals. Many of them are within easy reach of our shores; others in deeper water for which new techniques will have to be developed. The important thing is for Canada to identify these resources and move now to establish our rights to this wealth, settle the problems of controls over such things as depletion, pollution and policing, and get on with the task of developing the skills and the machinery to convert the potential into wealth for our country.

For Canadians, such studies would have even further direct benefits. Greater knowledge of our sea and underwater resources has important implications for fishing, navigation, weather sciences, not to mention our national prestige and the very obvious military implications. In our area we have a natural setting for the lead in such efforts. The Bedford Institute, Dalhousie University's Department of Oceanology, the National Research centre and the Defence Research Board blend smoothly with each other and the provinces' research efforts to make us in the Dartmouth-Halifax area a unique centre for such complex undertakings. That has been outlined by the Science Council of Canada. We have the industrial complex to support such effort and the skilled labour pool to back it up. We have a large naval complex and over 200 years of maritime experience. We have the shipyards and their traditional skills. In short, we have everything except the one, important ingredient, adequate federal interest and involvement.

• (5:10 p.m.)

I suggest that failure to take some initiatives now could well reduce us to a position of regulating the exploitation of the resources of our seabed. We could, as we have with so many of our minerals on land, wind up selling the raw material and buying back the finished products. We could lose the opportunity of opening up wide and diversified employment opportunities even in the early stages of such efforts. Time is the factor of importance, Mr. Speaker, not money. Failure to employ time wisely now could have long lasting adverse effects on our economic growth ability.

One area in which time could be spent very profitably, in my opinion, is in seabed geology. Surely, we could follow Australia's lead and prepare profile studies of our shelf and take the required core samplings to identify not only what the sub-sea floor is made up of, but in what