

## Canada Shipping Act

probably won't be the last since they are privy to all kinds of secret information.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Rose:** Leaving aside the catcalls from the very smug government benches, Mr. Speaker, I point out that we are no longer in the days of the sailing ship. Big spills have caused and will continue to cause extensive damage. The minister recognizes this. That is why we are here. That is why we are discussing this bill. We are dealing with ships not weighing 18,000 tons as was the *Arrow* but with ships of up to 400,000 tons. Let us see what the task force has to say when comparing shipping with aviation:

The sailing of ships is inherently easier and should be safer than the operation of commercial aircraft. They are substantially slower and it is a two dimensional rather than a three-dimensional problem. It is our judgment that until the nations of the world get together and sign a shipping convention, embodying the principles that have existed since the end of World War II in the civil aviation convention, of positive control and discipline, of proper standards of adequacy of equipment...the world is paying lip service to a problem of growing dimensions.

I am sure the minister will agree with that. International agreement has been sought on that point, and will continue to be sought.

If the example of the Arctic Pollution Prevention Act is to be a precedent for us, may I point out that international law is often made by recognizing existing national laws. We can take a lead in this area as well.

**Mr. Jamieson:** We are.

**Mr. Rose:** I turn now to my second major criticism of the bill, concerning the lack of preparedness in Canada to deal with oil disasters both before the *Arrow* incident and also today.

On October 1, in an issue of *The 4th Estate*, an article appeared dealing with the *Irving Whale*, the oil barge which sunk off Prince Edward Island, and to which the minister referred today. I quote the following excerpts from it:

The federal government still has no contingency plan to deal with major oil spills that occur in Canadian waters.

Had deep sea divers been summoned in the initial hours (of the sinking of the *Irving Whale*) they would have been able to plug the vent pipes. Naval divers were available for this purpose. Instead, civilian divers were hired eight days after the barge sank and the oil, chilled in 30 degree water 240 feet down, had congealed and practically stopped of its own accord.

To be fair it should be pointed out that two coastguard vessels dumped several tons of peat moss on the fringes of part of the slick to absorb the oil and make it easier to clean up if it went ashore. This action had more propaganda value than real effect.

The real problem is that Canada has no properly equipped and experienced salvage firm capable of dealing with the special problems posed by stricken vessels carrying petroleum products. Super tankers are now calling regularly at maritime ports. It is only a matter of time until the next serious oil spill occurs in this area.

We were just lucky, observes the writer of the article, Norman Pascoe.

• (2:30 p.m.)

I do not see anywhere in this bill any reference to protective plans and equipment facilities to look after the next disaster. The minister alluded to them in his opening remarks. Why aren't they in the bill? Without them we can expect further oil to be poured upon troubled waters. Let us have a look at some of the things the *Arrow* task force had to say in an effort to see whether consideration has been given to its recommendations in Bill C-2. The following appears at page 43 of the task force recommendations:

We recommend that the federal government should have the operational responsibility and authority for all major spills at sea and should reach agreement urgently with the provincial governments concerning the responsibility for all other major spills.

Then, on page 42 we find this:

We recommend that this responsibility of the Minister of Transport be focused in a small team at the headquarters level and comprising a minimum of one physical scientist, one biological scientist and one operations expert, with the physical scientist being the leader.

The following appears on page 55:

We recommend that stockpiles of material be located at strategic ports. These would include peat moss or other absorbents, booms and boom components, and a variety of equipment not readily available, which will vary with each location.

Then the task force recommends that at least one slick-licker be placed at each major port on the Canadian coast and that at least two others be held in a central contingency packet. Then, there is a recommendation that the Canadian coast guard should have primary responsibility for the recovery of oil floating on the water, which will include slick-lickers, containment booms and all other ramifications. And finally, the task force recommends that the Canadian coast guard be responsible for steam-cleaning operations. Lack of specific clean-up provisions is the type of oversight which concerns our party. I am not suggesting that the minister is not concerned about these things. These are matters we will be discussing when the bill is before us. It is very easy for one who does not have the responsibility of the minister to adopt a position of, "I told you so". I think we should be fair about acknowledging this. The point, however, is that the bill is silent in this regard. A quotation I just read from *The 4th Estate* suggested that preparedness is sadly lacking. What does the minister intend to do about this?

Earlier I spoke about unlimited liability and the difficulties surrounding that idea. This bill attempts a compromise through limited liability insurance, with the remainder of any damage to be paid from the consolidated revenue fund financed by a maximum of 15 cents a ton being levied on the shippers. If we take the figures for last year's imports and exports, which represented some 61 million tons, we find that our total revenue would amount to about \$9 million. Earlier, the minister said \$3 million. Obviously he is dealing with different figures. The total costs for the *Arrow* clean-up were approximately \$3 million.