

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Bill

put it around the Arctic islands to make sure no ships go near there. This is not a solution which I am sure even he—

Mr. Nesbitt: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, fun is fun but when the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett) gets to the point of distorting my remarks and putting in my mouth words which were not implied, it is a little too much.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It may be too much, but it is not a question of privilege. The hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett).

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I have concluded my remarks.

Mr. Ray Perrault (Burnaby-Seymour): Mr. Speaker, if there is a difference of opinion among the opposition members I know one of the government members would like to intervene to settle any difficulty which may exist there. This has been a reasonably amicable day. It is heartening that apart from certain technical criticisms, there exists in the House widespread support for Bill C-202.

I must meet one criticism that was made earlier this evening by the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse). He suggested that Canada had lost its position of prestige in international affairs and that we had not been sufficiently co-operative in matters related to protecting the world environment. At least, the implication was there that we had avoided opportunities to co-operate at the international level. I can tell members that no nation has fought more earnestly to undertake useful initiatives to protect the world environment than has Canada. I do not think a statement attacking Canada's reputation abroad is a useful one to introduce in this debate.

Canada, however, I think is somewhat frustrated. The United Nations Economic and Social Council report entitled "Problems of the Human Environment" outlines very well the situation which exists in the world today in respect of pollution of the sea. This is the source of our frustration. I quote as follows from page 15 of this document which was tabled at the last session:

Pollution of the sea is a continual threat to its future productivity. Although the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil has been in existence since 1954, oil pollution remains a major concern, and other forms of equally damaging pollution continue with little or no control.

This is the source of Canadian concern and frustration. No nation has been more willing
[Mr. Barnett.]

to co-operate at the world level to accelerate the process of developing her national standards. But when the United Nations itself admits failure and an inability to develop these standards, and when the ecology of the Arctic is in serious danger, Canadians cannot remain, as Churchill said, supine and silent while the destructive process goes on. At page 64 of this report we have the great hope held by U Thant. This is what he said:

The control of pollution in marine environment raises problems of legal nature such as measures which States can take outside their territorial seas in self-protection against pollution—

This is a recognition by all nations that this question has to be dealt with by nations of the world. The report continues:

—liabilities arising from casualties involving discharge of oil or other pollutants, powers of surveillance by coastal states to implement measures for improving the safety of navigation and controlling maritime pollution.

• (9:30 p.m.)

Then it tells us about the convening of the conference to be held at Brussels from November 10 to 28, 1969, with a view to adopting conventions on both the private and public law aspects of these problems. Canada was one of the most co-operative nations in the world to make the Brussels conference a success. The conference was not a success; it was another in a series of frustrations experienced by Canada and other nations with serious threats to their maritime ecology.

But let no one in any section of this House suggest that Canada has not made an earnest endeavour to inspire international concert to meet this problem of pollution and the protection of the environment. No nation has made a greater contribution at the United Nations to suggest ways in which the resources of the sea can be developed for the benefit of all mankind, and it is to the honour and credit of Canada that this has been done.

The hon. member for South Shore should not have made the statement he did. The need for legislative action to protect the delicate ecological balance in the Arctic has been treated very eloquently this evening by my colleague the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin, who I thought made a splendid contribution to this debate. But some very useful remarks have been made by opposition members as well.

Recent pollution catastrophes have served to emphasize the pressing need for stringent anti-pollution measures on all of Canada's