

Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Bill

I have no maps with me. The pollution zone will be defined later on by order in council. We cannot now table maps of these zones because we are not ready as yet to do so. This legislation gives the power needed by the government to define these protection zones where there is danger of pollution but they are not embodied in the legislation. The legislation covers the area above the 60th parallel where we will have the power to define the zones.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important that the Canadian people not be misled by what is proposed in Bills C-202 and C-203 which must be taken together although, of course, I understand that we are discussing Bill C-202 this afternoon. The government has pretended to assert a strong claim to sovereignty and has made a dramatic withdrawal from the jurisdiction of international courts. Canadians should not be misled about what, in fact, is proposed.

These two bills have to be considered together. They are a package. I suggest that, by introducing them, the government does not expand our claim to sovereignty; it reduces it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: These bills together are but a half-measure and indicate the government has abandoned Canada's claim to sovereignty in certain critical parts of the Arctic. I am afraid that the weak and limited nature of the claim to sovereignty of this government will haunt other Canadian governments for years, and probably forever.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: In so far as pollution control is concerned, of course we support the bill and I am sure the people of Canada support it. But let it be clear that there are two separate questions here, pollution control on the one hand and Canadian sovereignty on the other. While we in this party welcome and support any effective action to prevent pollution of our north, even at this late date, we cannot let the government get away with the claim that it is, at the same time, serving Canada's interests in asserting sovereignty.

As the minister has explained, Mr. Speaker, Bill C-202 defines the jurisdiction that the government of Canada proposes to exercise in order to control the pollution of a zone that is defined in the bill. The Prime Minister (Mr.

Trudeau) has emphasized that this is an exercise of extraterritorial jurisdiction rather than a claim to sovereignty.

On the other hand, Bill C-203 which was introduced at the same time, purports to redefine our territorial waters from three miles to 12 miles from a baseline as defined in the bill. In other words, Bill C-203 constitutes an assertion of sovereignty with regard to this redefinition of our territorial waters. But it is very clear from Bill C-203 that the government is not asking the Parliament of Canada to assert sovereignty over any waters beyond the 12-mile limit that is proposed. Indeed, sir, in the circumstances, it is clear in the context not only does Bill C-203 not involve an assertion of any sovereignty beyond the 12-mile limit, but by implication at least involves the abandonment of any claim to sovereignty in waters beyond the 12-mile limit. These are waters that we have claimed. We can all agree very readily that the 12-mile limit will not include all the water between the Arctic Islands or all the water between the Arctic Islands and the mainland and, therefore, if Bill C-203 is passed in its present form, there will be substantial blocks of water over which Canada has, by implication at least, abandoned any claim to sovereignty. These are waters over which this country has been claiming sovereignty.

• (3:30 p.m.)

The Prime Minister raised doubts a year ago about our claims to these waters, or some of these waters. I say in all frankness and bluntness that, although he raised certain claims a year ago, he now is presenting bills through his ministers which amount to an abandonment of these claims. We have asked questions of the Prime Minister before as to what waters Canada was claiming. He has told us in the House that we would have to wait to see the legislation which would define the claims that Canada is making. We have now received this legislation and can see that the waters over which Canada is claiming sovereignty fall far short of the waters over which the people of Canada and their governments were claiming sovereignty and far short of the waters over which the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development has urged the government to assert sovereignty. I suggest that in these circumstances the remark of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) that he hoped we would look after the interests of Canada in this debate were far out of place.