

still do not like to bet with a jockey in a situation. You are directly passing on their qualifications and reviewing their actions. I think it gives you a standing by virtue of your other functions, that no one else has, in that you are dealing with the personnel; and I think this is something the committee will consider.

Admiral TRIMBLE. Many of the oil spills are related to a marine casualty, and if it occurs in our waters or involves U.S.-flag ships, we investigate the casualty and attempt to determine, or investigate the cause. If it is a major casualty, the National Transportation Safety Board makes a final determination as to cause.

The incident down in San Juan happened in territorial waters, and we are investigating that casualty now to attempt to find the facts which will lead to a determination of the cause.

It just happens that this is a Liberian vessel with a Liberian crew, so an additional complication that the Coast Guard is involved within the international aspects of operation of vessels in our waters and harbors.

Mr. McEWEN. That vessel at San Juan, I am not familiar with that. Do they have harbor pilotage there?

Admiral TRIMBLE. Yes, they do have harbor pilotage in San Juan. The vessel came into port, and the pilot came out to meet it. The ship was in the process of picking up the pilot when this happened. The pilot did get on board just before the incident took place.

I am not trying to say that he was at fault, because the ship was already in a situation, apparently, that was dangerous with respect to the channel, considering the draft of the vessel.

Mr. McEWEN. He got there just in time.

Admiral TRIMBLE. Just in time, with a minute or two to spare, to get off the ship when it happened, and when she started breaking in two. He was part of the crew rescued.

Mr. McEWEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. McCARTHY. Thank you, Admiral.

I would like to add a word of praise about the Coast Guard, which I think has a brilliant record in the history of our country and certainly in this field of preserving our waters, and say that mine is a Coast Guard family. I have a brother-in-law who is a warrant officer with the Coast Guard, now serving in Spain, where he is working on a loran station.

We have a very high regard for the Coast Guard.

We want to thank you for coming here today, and we look forward to hearing from you on spelling out the authority in this matter, to clean it up.

FEDERAL PREEMPTION OF VESSEL POLLUTION CONTROL FIELD

Admiral TRIMBLE. Mr. Chairman, if I may, there is one thing I would like to add by way of suggestion. I do not notice in any of the bills, as far as waste from watercraft, that there is a preemption provided for on the part of the Federal Government with respect to State actions.

I am thinking of vessels. Let us take, to give you an example of the problem, a vessel in interstate commerce or even a pleasure boat, a