

to deal with this constantly growing threat. H.R. 15906 provides, in my opinion, the basis for these vital improvements. My companion bill, H.R. 16559, calls for two amendments to the committee's bill, and I would like to call your attention to these changes.

COVERAGE SHOULD EXTEND TO PORTIONS OF THE HIGH SEAS

First, my bill would broaden the geographical area of the Secretary's cleanup responsibilities, to include portions of the high seas outside the 12-mile zone designated in H.R. 15906. Subsection (j) on page 7 of my bill says that:

The Secretary may also remove or arrange for the removal of oil discharged in any manner into the high seas outside the contiguous zone if such oil may lead to pollution of the navigable waters of the United States or the waters of the contiguous zone, or if such oil threatens damage to valuable resources on or above the Continental Shelf.

Any large-scale oil spill, Mr. Chairman, would pose a serious threat to fisheries resources which lie far beyond the 12-mile area contemplated by the committee bill, and should be within the authority of the Secretary to ameliorate. The Georges Banks fishing grounds, which extends some 200 miles off the coast of Cape Cod and which produce 12 percent of the world's total fish catch, are extremely vulnerable to pollution resulting from tanker traffic, and they should be included within the protection of this legislation.

I should point out, Mr. Chairman, that this proposed amendment does not extend any of the penalties or liabilities in the bill to ships operating on the high seas, and thus does not involve any international legal complications.

RESPONSIBILITIES SHOULD BE ASSIGNED IN ADVANCE OF EMERGENCY

The second improvement to which I would like to draw your attention is in subsection (k), also on page 7 of my bill. Paragraph (1) says that the Secretary shall, "immediately upon enactment of this section, and where appropriate, delegate to other Federal agencies the authority for planning, directing, controlling, and coordinating the removal of such oil" from the affected waters and shorelines.

The reason for this change is that the committee bill, on pages 6 and 7, paragraphs (1) and (2), is somewhat vague in stating just how and when the Secretary shall delegate the clean-up responsibility to the other agencies which will have the actual operating authority. We should not wait until an accident has occurred and the oil is on the water, to designate the agency which will take action. This is indeed the fatal weakness in the present law, and we should not repeat it in the new program.

My amendment would require the Secretary to make immediate arrangements for the assigning of responsibility well in advance of an emergency. Machinery would be set up and contingency plans would be made for coping with oil spills, avoiding the need for last-minute improvising.

In Puerto Rico, Mr. Chairman, I found that the government authorities on the scene were confused about their authority to act, and that emergency preparations were virtually nonexistent. Despite any studies or reports that have been made since the *Torrey Canyon*