

Nixon or Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton, would the right hon. gentleman himself, or the Secretary of State for External Affairs, seek a meeting with either the President or Mr. Morton and invite the premier of British Columbia to accompany him as the premier of the province most adversely affected by this project which will entail large tankers plying the coastal waters of British Columbia?

• (1130)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): If I might preface my answer, Mr. Speaker, the House might be interested in being reminded that the action to which the hon. member referred follows a court decision in connection with which the leader of the Liberal opposition in British Columbia made an important input. On the question of representations, the Department of External Affairs and our embassy in Washington are always ready to help premiers of Canadian provinces to arrange interviews with important government officials in the United States. In this instance Mr. Rogers Morton knows, of course, the Canadian position. It was stated forcibly by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources last March and has been expressed publicly many times. We are very happy that the premier of British Columbia now wishes to make representations to support our views.

Mr. Douglas: I had hoped that the Prime Minister would himself support such representations by personal intervention. In view of the fact the previous parliament unanimously passed a resolution expressing its adamant opposition to the United States government proceeding with the trans-Alaska pipeline project, would the Prime Minister undertake to have such a motion introduced in this parliament so that the present Members of Parliament might be able to express their views and have those views conveyed to the government of the United States?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has suggested that personal representations be made to the President. I would remind him that when I met the President last spring I did make representations about this question and about the danger of a tanker route on both the east and west coasts of Canada. As to the second part of the question having to do with a resolution the House can, of course, study such a resolution if it wishes but at this time we do not see any advantage in doing so. Our representations have been made known very strongly at all levels in the United States, and I think there may be a limit to the efficiency which this House could expect to achieve by passing resolutions urging the government of the United States to conduct its affairs in a certain manner rather than in another.

Mr. Douglas: In light of the right hon. gentleman's expressed concern about pollution on the two coasts of Canada, may I ask the Prime Minister whether the government has given any consideration to introducing legislation similar to the Arctic pollution control legislation which would bring all oil tankers entering the coastal waters of Canada under rigid supervision and control?

Mr. Trudeau: Well, Mr. Speaker, the question really requires a complex answer. The trick is, of course, not to

Oral Questions

pass legislation but to make it acceptable in international law. I think the hon. member appreciates that the steps taken by the government in the Arctic are of a particular nature because of the special circumstances of the Arctic. We cannot expect to make similar legislation stick as successfully in international law, especially if, as I understand the suggestion of the hon. member, it were to extend to some of the waters under United States jurisdiction.

PROPOSED WEST COAST OIL TANKER ROUTE— SUGGESTED CONTROL BY INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Can the right hon. gentleman tell the House, bearing in mind the fact that the United States government now appears to prefer the trans-Alaska and tanker route, what steps have been taken recently, or at all, to try to negotiate with our United States friends to the end that the tanker route might be controlled by an international commission consisting of both Canadians and Americans, in which case, rather than simply worrying about the effects of a spill we would have a maximum chance of preventing a spill from taking place?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): This is the very subject I discussed with the President last spring. The suggestion we were making at the time was that it be done through the International Joint Commission. It has been found, since those meetings I had with the President, that a more useful and acceptable way would be to set up a committee composed of representatives of our two countries, and this has been done.

Mr. Fraser: Can the Prime Minister tell the House when he will be able to report as to the success of these negotiations, since it appears that time is now of the essence?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, it was already of the essence last spring when I talked to the President, and action has been taken along the lines I suggested. As to the exact date and nature of that report, I will refer the question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources so that he can attend to it.

OIL—CONTINGENCY PLAN TO ASSURE SUPPLY FOR EASTERN CANADA—INCENTIVES TO DEVELOP RESERVES

Mr. Peter Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the Prime Minister on the question of security of oil supply to eastern Canada. It is now clear that there is a threat and a danger of interruption of continuity of supply. The Prime Minister has told us that discussions are under way. The government has been aware of this problem for several years. When will a contingency plan be presented to the House so we will know what the government intends to do? Will the right hon. gentleman also be urging the Minister of Finance to encourage Canadians through proper incentives to develop further reserves in Canada, giving Canadians a chance to own the oil we should be finding here?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The hon. member is right, of course, when he says the problem has been known for several years. But the imminence of the