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systems fail, that humans fail and when it does happen we are saddened and angered by it.

I know that there are alternatives to securing the energy requirements for ourselves and for our neighbours in North America. I know that all of us must work hard to develop alternatives to the system to which we are tied now. Our scientists are working hard on that. Let us not be naive to think that we can do it next week, next year or even 10 years from now. For some time we will be tied to the system that has been built over the last 100 years. We will be tied to develop the best possible technology to make sure that these accidents do not happen. Yes, I will be the first to speak anywhere in the country, here in the House and in Cabinet to make sure that we learn a lesson from this accident, that we will discuss what we have learned with our neighbours and insist that the system be improved to the point where a disaster of this magnitude will never happen again.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, I want to state tonight that I bet the people of the United States are saying no to the Chairman of Exxon and his apology that he splashed over every American newspaper on Monday. Buying full page ads does not compensate for anything.

The day after the spill occurred and the Alyeska pipeline was closed, the oil price went up and Exxon actually made a profit. What about the rest of us? This is the largest oil spill in North American history. It has serious implications for Arctic regions around the world, for much of the western coasts, for marine life and its food-chain, and for oil and gas activities, particularly in remote and sensitive regions such as the region I represent. This is not just a simple error by an insignificant company as a result of which a few Americans, some birds and some fish have been victimized.

As the Member for Western Arctic, I can say that this tragedy has a direct bearing on the region of Canada from where I come. I want to tell the Members what has taken place in the Beaufort Delta since the accident on Good Friday and the contribution which Canada is making to its neighbours which closely borders my riding. Four Hercules planes have been expedited from Yellowknife and Inuvik with equipment to help with the clean-up of the Valdez tanker spill. Last week I attended a meeting in Calgary of the Arctic Institute of North America of which I am a board member. The oil industry people who were present there led us to understand that

the members of the Beaufort Co-op, which consists of Amoco, Gulf and Esso, offered their oil spill equipment and Exxon refused any assistance until Tuesday, five days after the catastrophic spill. They simply did not move fast enough.

Mr. Speaker, 240,000 barrels of oil had spilled from a tanker which had gone aground due to human error and gross negligence. The company said that it would manage on its own. From all indications it has not managed at all.

Another week later Exxon accepted the Canadian offer and the Beaufort Co-op sent miles of fireproof booms, igniters, heli-torches, storage burners and saci burners from the Canadian north to the Port of Valdez. Three Canadians have gone with the equipment to help with the deployment and mobilization. These three people have worked in the North quite extensively. One comes from a community in my constituency, a man by the name of Jack Goose from Aklavik. It seems remote. It seems out of the way and maybe insignificant—perhaps not even possible—but these people in the North have something to contribute.

I want to talk briefly on the comparisons of this spill with the oil and gas activities taking place in the Beaufort Delta region. I recently submitted an intervention to the National Energy Board on the applications by Esso, Gulf and Shell to export gas from the Canadian Arctic. Thus I feel close to the subject. I have some knowledge of it. As well, I was living in Tuktoyaktuk near the Beaufort Sea on the Arctic coastline in the mid-1970s when industry began its offshore activities in the Beaufort.

I am originally from Fort Norman, a small community near Norman Wells, site of one of the first oil discoveries in Canada in 1921, and which is now in production with a pipeline which was constructed in the early 1980s from Norman Wells to Zama, Alberta. Therefore I am familiar with what happens when a small traditional community whose residents basically depend on hunting, trapping and fishing is faced with large scale development. I remember when the Alyeska pipeline was being constructed from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. There was a lot of controversy, but in particular the people in Valdez did not want a major oil tanker port being built in their area. Valdez is a marine sanctuary like no other in the world. Sea otters, which are a threatened species, live in the waters of Prince William Sound, the water next to Valdez. There are only 12,000, and as the number of dead otters increases, this has implications for their population world-wide.