

CANDU system. I hope the hon. lady and her party will support the CANDU system, because some of the remarks she and her associates have made do not help the corporation to sell the CANDU reactor.

● (1140)

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): And you are not helping the country, either.

Mr. Gillies: How can you help the country if you lose money with practically every sale?

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NEGOTIATIONS WITH UNITED STATES FOR AGREEMENT ON USE OF STRAIT OF JUAN DE FUCA BY OIL TANKERS—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Some weeks ago the minister indicated that Canada was close to agreement with the United States on the question of tankers which will ply the Strait of Juan de Fuca, a question of great interest to British Columbia since, at present, more than 550 oil tankers ply these straits. When the Alyeska line is completed and oil reaches Valdez, more tankers will bring oil down to Cherry Point. Has the agreement been completed? If so, what is the nature of the agreement, and what are its terms, particularly with reference to controls and to compensation for those who may have to bear the cost of oil spills?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, negotiations with the United States have moved along quite well and a vast number of issues leading to agreement have been settled. There are still six or seven outstanding issues, I think, being discussed by the two sets of negotiators. As of yesterday, when I discussed the point with the Canadian negotiating team, we determined the posture we will take with regard to those remaining items and I will communicate with the Secretary of State in the United States to indicate our proposals on those outstanding matters. We shall do this in an effort to have these matters cleaned up more quickly than might be the case if the conventional negotiating process were adopted. As to the actual date, I cannot inform the hon. member of that, although I can tell him this: Even after the agreement is completed it will take some time to ratify it before the American Congress. I am told that their procedure requires that. I am also told that the system can be used on a voluntary basis, as, indeed, much of it is being used at present.

As to specific matters, I am sure the hon. member will understand I would as soon not talk about certain elements to do with compensation and the like which are being discussed in the package until agreement, hopefully, is reached; but I can assure the hon. member that these matters, which I agree are of great importance, are being discussed and in some instances have been resolved.

Oral Questions

REGULATION OF TANKERS FLYING FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer but am sure he appreciates, as other members do, that oil will shortly begin to move from Valdez, Alaska, and those likely to be affected are extremely anxious to know what compensation provisions are being made to deal with the situation.

May I also ask the minister this question. Since there has been talk of oil being brought from Indonesia to Cherry Point, which would mean another 80 tankers bringing oil from various areas in addition to tankers now plying the Strait of Juan de Fuca, I ask, what provision is being made within the 200-mile limit to deal with ships flying flags of convenience, ships which will very likely transport oil from Indonesia or the far east? At present such ships have been the least subject to controls, the least subject to adequate precautions for dealing with oil spills, the least subject to regulations covering the pumping out of oil tanks in Canadian waters. Is the department taking steps, under some agreement, to protect as much as possible the people on the west coast of Canada and to make sure that the west coast will not be the dumping ground for oil pumped out or from vessels not adequately equipped to ply those dangerous waters?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the question of non-United States or non-Canadian vessels which are not, as the House will understand, part of the bilateral arrangement with the United States is one of considerable difficulty, since there is difficulty in getting an international understanding. The Law of the Sea Conference which just concluded its most recent session in New York saw Canada assert a very strong position with regard to coastal state or port state control over the 200-mile zone. There is strong opposition to this by some countries. Therefore, no international agreement was possible at this current negotiating round. I do know that my colleagues in the Department of Transport and the Department of the Environment have in mind certain plans and activities relating to the zone, but I would emphasize that there is no international agreement and there may be some questions about enforcement beyond the so-called territorial sea out to the 200-mile limit.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I ask one short supplementary question?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's exchanges have already taken up some ten minutes, which I think is generous enough.