

Adjournment Debate

Mr. Baldwin: In other words you have nothing else ready?

● (2200)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

ENERGY—PROPOSED WEST COAST OIL TANKER ROUTE— INQUIRY AS TO CANADA-UNITED STATES COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION—CANADIAN PROPOSALS

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, on March 8 I asked some questions of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis). I notice he is not here tonight, nor apparently is his parliamentary secretary. However, notwithstanding that I notice the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) is here, and considering the fact that the questions raised are matters of some concern to him perhaps he will hear my remarks and give me the answers I would otherwise expect to receive from the Minister of the Environment. I notice that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Rompkey) has just entered the House.

In March of this year I asked the Minister of the Environment what had been done by the Canadian government and the United States government to enter into control arrangements in respect of tankers on the west coast. Since that time a great deal has been revealed to us. I was about to say that a great deal had happened, but nothing very much has happened since the session ended on July 27 this year.

Before the adjournment I happened to have the privilege of speaking on the adjournment debate. At that time I pointed out to the House that, in view of the problems we now have in respect of United States legislation approving the tanker route, we are in the position that we do not know what the reaction of the Canadian government will be. Despite the brave words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs that we have only begun to fight, Parliament has been adjourned for a month now and we have heard little about the fight the Canadian government is waging.

On July 27, 1973 the Secretary of State for External Affairs took umbrage when I said that the government had assured residents of the west coast that everything was being done not just to keep tankers out of Puget Sound, as has been suggested, but to stop the tanker route entirely. The minister's reply was to the effect that he did not think that was so. I remind the House that on November 20, 1971, in the *Montreal Star* there appeared a Canadian Press story concerning the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in which he is reported to have

[Mr. Reid.]

said that they are still interested in a pipeline. The article goes on to say:

... Mr. Chrétien rejected a reported statement by U.S. Interior Secretary Rogers Morton that Canada has lost interest in an Arctic pipeline.

"That is not the case," Mr. Chrétien said. "We are interested."

"We, as Canadians, are not too happy with the fact that they are planning to use tankers from Alaska to California ...

I underline the word "California".

... because there would be great danger to the beautiful coast of B.C."

"That is why we have to consider the possibility of having the pipeline through Canada."

The Secretary of State for External Affairs may take some comfort from the fact that some time earlier, on October 8, 1971, he was reported in the *Sun* as saying that he was not quite certain that any oil protest was of any use. It seems strange the government has decided to fight—in the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs—and yet a month has gone by in which nothing has happened. We had a parliamentary delegation go to the United States. We recognize that the legal machinery of the United States Congress has taken effect and that we are to have a pipeline across Alaska, which means we will have a tanker route down the west coast of British Columbia, not just to California but into Puget Sound.

We simply want to know what has been done since we adjourned on July 27. What negotiations and initiatives are being taken on the part of the government vis-à-vis Canada and the United States to decide whether or not there is a *quid pro quo* between Canada and the United States to get the tankers out of Puget Sound? We want to know, in a word, whether the government has started to fight, and if not when it intends to do so.

Mr. William Rompkey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, our concern about the risk to the environment entailed in the passage of super tankers through the Straits of Juan de Fuca to Puget Sound has been made clear on a number of occasions, both in communications with the United States and in public statements. Our preference would obviously have been for an overland pipeline route through Canada. However, developments in the Congress of the United States make it obvious that this is not to be so. However, there is still time for discussions on this matter because it is some time yet before the oil actually begins to flow.

The Canadian government is not able to prevent the construction of the trans-Alaskan pipeline since it is entirely within U.S. territory. The great bulk of the oil is being transported to California, as has been said before, in large vessels. However, some of it is planned to go into Puget Sound. There is no reason why Canada should be concerned about the traffic going to California. Our concern is with tankers going into Puget Sound through the Straits of Juan de Fuca. We have sought to influence the United States either to supply these refineries in Puget Sound in some other manner or to manage the tanker traffic in such a way as to minimize risk.

One proposal has been to supply the needs of those refineries overland from Canada. To do this it would be necessary to enter into discussions with the United States