

Oil Pollution

indeed a very stupid thing to do. We believe that the Cherry Point refinery can be serviced from the land. It is not the building of the Cherry Point refinery that is the trouble, it is how it has been supplied. It has been our contention to the United States government that the refinery can be supplied from the land just as effectively as from the sea. The commission will not be helped, nor will the two governments, if its task is badly defined. But proper regard for precision should not be a cause for delay. What we have been trying to impress on the United States is our sense of the urgency and importance of the question.

We can be confident, too, that an investigation by the International Joint Commission will be constructive. We have only to look at the excellent work done by the International Joint Commission on the Great Lakes where the report it made has been accepted by both governments and where machinery has been established for clean-up. Indeed, we have a case at the present time of the break-up of a tanker on the Great Lakes, the *Sydney E. Smith* which is being handled in accordance with the procedures agreed to by our two governments. The vessel is in American waters and we can see that the Americans are observing the agreements that have been made for dealing with emergencies like this.

We can be confident that an investigation by the International Joint Commission will be constructive. It has been our experience in these matters that we can persuade the United States to go along. The International Joint Commission is a valuable international instrument. It has proven its worth over half a century in a series of cases that have been valuable to Canada and the United States. If these relations between our two countries are to be dealt with we need permanent machinery of this kind. I hope there is no suggestion in this debate, and I have heard very little, that reference to the International Joint Commission is not one of the most useful and constructive things that can be done. That is why I was happy to see the hon. member for Fraser Valley East pinpoint his suggestion on reference to the International Joint Commission. I have looked at the other motions that have been put before this House and I suggest that this is the most effective action that this House could take in supporting the concern—

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, if the minister will permit a question, I should like to ask whether the next time he drafts an appropriate motion he might hand it to somebody else in the House.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I can think of no one more suitable than the hon. member for Fraser Valley East who feels the interests of British Columbia more effectively than any of the NDP members from British Columbia.

• (1240)

Mr. Pringle: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East rises on a point of order.

Mr. Pringle: Mr. Speaker, I categorically deny the statement made by the leader of the New Democratic Party. I wrote the motion in pencil first, and had it typed.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, this is an example of the superior literacy of the members of the Liberal back benches. Apparently, in the NDP all these things are inspired from the top. We have some grass roots movement of which we are very proud.

The government is conscious of the growing number of environmental problems Canada shares with the United States. Many of these will have to be attacked from a new angle. We are fortunate, however, in that a certain range of these problems having to do especially with pollution of boundary waters can be effectively tackled by an experienced yet adaptable body, the International Joint Commission. For this reason the government foresees a growing role for the IJC in future.

If I may digress for a moment, may I talk about the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) and make some further comments on it. I think I understand the spirit in which the amendment has been put forward. It seeks to support the IJC and make sure that it has the necessary resources with which to carry on its valuable work. This motion, of course, cannot add to the powers of the IJC; nor can it instruct the United States government to make resources available. As the House no doubt understands, the IJC must work on a joint reference and not on a single, unilateral reference. So far as I am concerned, and I think I speak for the members of the government in the House, we will not oppose this amendment. We will support it in the interests of unanimity, which I know hon. members of the House would like to see.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: What a sacrifice!

Mr. Alexander: That is what one might call sweet reasoning.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, you know, we are approaching this in a spirit of non-controversiality and in the spirit of trying to treat this problem as a serious, national problem; we do not want to introduce political overtones such as have been introduced by those on the other side of the House on many occasions. We want this resolution to be approved unanimously. I want this IJC reference to be supported by all members of the House. It is in that spirit that I support the amendment, even though I did not have a chance to draft it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Fold your wings, Mitch.

Mr. Sharp: If I may speak for Canada, we have made provision to put greater Canadian resources at the disposal of the commission. We have urged upon the United States the good sense of building upon the commission's previous work on pollution in internal boundary waters by a reference which would deal with the pollution danger for the first time in coastal waters. This is the first time that a reference of this kind has been attempted, and we are putting all our persuasive powers behind it in an effort to make the United States recognize that this area in future will be just as important as the Great Lakes have