

Oil Pollution

Mr. Basford: That is quite easy to answer. It was made clear yesterday, in the report given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp), that this had been done, that our embassy in Washington had already brought the matter forcefully to the attention of the United States authorities.

Then on Thursday along came the hon. member for Fraser Valley East with a motion relating to the international aspects of this matter, aspects beyond the territory and jurisdiction of Canada, asking that the United States join with us in a reference to the IJC to look at these situations. That, of course, is a useful motion which this House should have before it, as it has now. I hope it will be carried unanimously when the vote is taken.

The government previously declared itself on this question. As was made clear yesterday by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and again last evening by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald), the government at every point of contact with the United States government, from the President down, had urged this course of action. The government had declared itself and had made its position clear. The time had arrived when it would be helpful and appropriate if the House of Commons called upon the United States government for a response to the request of the Canadian government.

That is the type of motion which should have been put. Had it been put before, it would have been agreed to on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. It does not seem to me that the presentation of a motion of the type that would ask the United States government to respond to our suggestion that the IJC be called in to deal with certain international aspects beyond our territorial waters could be termed as trickery or playing games. It is a disappointment to me that the leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Lewis) would describe such reasonable initiative as trickery.

In listening to members of the New Democratic Party and to some opposition spokesmen it would seem that they overstate their case to the extent that they lose credibility. They state that this government has a record of non-performance in this area and is not concerned with environmental issues. The fact is that this government is doing more in terms of protection, preservation and conservation of the environment than any other government in the world.

Mr. Woolliams: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Basford: Perhaps we might look at a few things this Parliament has done. This Parliament has passed the Canada Water Act, the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, the Canada Shipping Act, the Northern Inland Waters Act, the Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act, major extensions of Canada's territorial seas, major extensions in respect of the preservation of our fishing resource and important amendments to the Fisheries Act relating to any waters frequented by fish, to ensure they are protected.

This Parliament, through the initiative of the government, passed major amendments to the Oil and Gas Pro-

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

duction and Conservation Act relating to water pollution and to the protection of our water environment and the resources of our waters and seas. We have taken action relative to the Clean Air Act concerning the protection of our air. There have been amendments to the Motor Vehicle Safety Act relative to exhaust emissions. Many important pieces of legislation have been passed. The leader of the New Democratic Party described these as pieces of paper. That is an insult to Parliament.

I think in this Parliament we have passed very important pieces of environmental protection legislation at the initiative and with the leadership of this government. Within the government we have taken action, for example, to reduce the phosphate level of detergents. Measures have been passed under the Pest Control Products Act to deal with DDT and other pesticides. Extremely generous tax incentives have been given to industry respecting devices and anti-pollution measures to reduce air and water pollution resulting from industrial processes. We have been providing over \$500 million through one of my own agencies, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, for the construction of sewage disposal plants to reduce the demands on our clean waters. Those are things which we have been doing within our own territory, under our own jurisdiction.

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We have also been taking positions internationally and have been at the forefront of international action. We are one of the leaders at the environmental conference which is now being held at Stockholm. If the official opposition want to, they can belittle the importance of our efforts, but let us look at the record.

Mr. Baldwin: There is so much to belittle.

Mr. Basford: We read such headlines from Stockholm as "Canadians break stalemate at environmental conference".

Mr. Baldwin: After first reversing their position.

Mr. Basford: Let us not forget the work of my colleague from British Columbia, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis). Another headline about the Stockholm conference which appeared in one of the Vancouver papers today reads, "Canada wins day in ocean pollution law". Further action is being taken in Stockholm at the international level to ensure tough, tight and proper environmental protection action in areas that are beyond our territorial seas and beyond our immediate national jurisdiction.

The concern of this government is precisely the reason why we are playing a leading role at that United Nations conference on the environment. Surely hon. members know the very strong stand that we have taken there regarding oil pollution. When my colleague from British Columbia returns from Stockholm, where he is leading the Canadian delegation, he will undoubtedly report to the House in detail on the success of the leading role Canada has played at the conference. Canada has been supporting and has worked effectively at that conference to win support for a multinational declaration of principles which will go a long way toward keeping clean our air, our water and our beaches.