

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 21, 1972

The House met at 2 p.m.

[Translation]

PRIVILEGE

MR. LA SALLE—PROTEST AGAINST INACCURATE
NEWSPAPER REPORT

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise on a question of privilege.

Last Saturday, the newspaper *La Presse* reported that the hon. member for Joliette had asked for the resignation of the right hon. Prime Minister. I should like to advise the House, and at the same time reassure the Prime Minister, that I have never made such a statement. It is my duty to add that the statement was made by another Roch, who is no relative of mine. I trust this incident did not inconvenience the Prime Minister too much.

[English]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Fourth report of Standing Committee on Transport and Communications—Mr. Turner (London East).

[Editor's Note: For the text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

REPORT BY MINISTER ON UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was a great success. Representatives of 112 nations agreed at Stockholm, often unanimously, to a set of principles, an action plan and an organizational structure which will help mankind to fight pollution on land, in the sea and in the air.

The success of the first UN Conference on the Environment was due, in large measure, to the leadership shown by Canada and by Canadians. The efforts of Secretary General, Mr. Maurice Strong, in laying the groundwork for the conference are well known. Our Canadian delegation, with representatives from the provinces and from industry, helped to frame many important resolutions and to ensure that recommendations important to Canada were embodied in the final action plan. Principles of particular interest to a country like Canada with its long coastline and its proximity to highly industrialized areas

in the United States were initiated by us and were endorsed by all other nations at the conference, many of which face pollution problems similar to our own.

Before listing a number of Canadian initiatives which were endorsed by the conference at Stockholm, I would like to pay a special tribute to the work done by our officials. Mr. Allan Beesley, more than anyone else at the conference, helped us to take a giant step forward in the development of international environmental law. Mr. Robert Shaw and Dr. David Munro represented Environment Canada with distinction. Mr. Paul Tremblay and Mr. Geoff Bruce of the Department of External Affairs made sure that our recommendations were always in tune with other developments in the United Nations organization and that our Canadian delegation operated like a team at all stages in the conference's deliberations.

I might note, parenthetically, that the international press rated our delegation as the strongest contingent in Stockholm. Its reporters reached this conclusion mainly because we outlined our objectives at the beginning of the conference and then managed, as a result of a great deal of lobbying and debate, to have them emerge virtually unscathed in the final declaration and action plan.

Our collective accomplishments, Mr. Speaker, cover a broad front. They range from the identification of atmospheric pollutants of global concern to the dumping of toxic substances on the high seas. Provisions were made for the protection of endangered species, of wildlife and for the payment of compensation when the effects of pollution originating in one country were felt in another country.

A world registry of clean rivers is to be set up and the harvesting of renewable resources, including fish, must be placed on an optimum, sustained yield basis.

More specifically, in the area of marine pollution Canada deliberately set out to utilize the Stockholm Conference as a means to the further advancement of international law. We tabled a set of marine pollution principles, all 23 of which were endorsed by the conference.

A statement of objectives was also agreed upon, stressing the need to manage ocean space and the special interests of the coastal state in that management process.

The Stockholm Conference referred to a conference to be held in London later this year draft articles for an ocean dumping convention which provides not only for effective control from an environmental point of view but also for enforcement by all parties, including coastal nations, against "ships under their jurisdiction".

With regard to the special rights of coastal states, the Stockholm Conference took note of them and "referred these principles to the 1973 IMCO Conference for information and to the 1973 Law of the Sea Conference for action".