Egmont to close off his application. I can indicate to the Hon. Member for Egmont that I understand perfectly his position.

Mr. Henderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask that this motion be considered today as a priority of the House because it is a very serious situation not only for consumers but for the producers of shellfish in Atlantic Canada. I hope that the Chair will rule in our favour.

Mr. Speaker: I have had a chance to consider with very great care the application of the Hon. Member for Egmont, as I considered with very great care a very similar application on Friday from the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps). Without going into any extensive discussion, may I say that the matter raised is, of course, serious. I think that would be agreed to by all Members of the House. However, under the circumstances and at this moment, it is not the disposition of the Chair to order an emergency debate.

I think there may well be other ways today to make inquiries, which I know the Hon. Member for Egmont will want to make, as he has every right to make, and I can assure him that ample opportunity will be given to the Hon. Member later on today to make those inquiries. The Hon. Member not only has a right to do so but I think Hon. Members would consider it a duty.

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RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

CONCURRENCE IN THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador) moved:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Research, Science and Technology presented to the House on Tuesday, June 30, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to have the opportunity to comment on the third report of the Standing Committee on Research, Science and Technology on the space program.

The committee, as you know, Mr. Speaker, travelled across the country and heard a wide variety of views from Governments, universities and industry and made a number of recommendations, 24 in total, to which the Government has responded.

The committee noted, of course, Canada's history in the communications field and its enviable role and position and reputation in that field. In September of 1962, with the flight of Alouette I, Canada became the third country in space and we have continued to build on that success.

The first recommendation of the committee was with respect to Radarsat, which is, of course, only one of the examples of Canada's continuing lead in communications and in the space program. We recommended that that be given top priority and the Minister agreed and announced, I believe on June 25, that the Government of Canada had approved the Radarsat project. That project will go ahead.

It will be very important to the whole country, particularly my part of the country and, indeed, to farmers in the west and a whole variety of Canadians because it gives us the kind of technology to forecast, to see what is happening, to look ahead and warn, to provide all sorts of valuable information as to what is happening in the environment and to funnel and channel that information to interested groups, whether they be fishermen at sea, farmers in the field, or whomever.

I would note in passing that we still have not solved all the problems. We still have not gone as far as we should go, given the eminence of Radarsat, the advanced state of the technology and given the usefulness of that particular project. We still need to go further. We still need, for example, to be able to forecast accurately what is happening underneath the water. Radarsat will be able to look through the cloud cover but it will not be able to go beneath the surface of the ice or water.

One of our difficulties historically has been forecasting what is happening in the marine environment. The whole issue of mussels and shellfish in the Atlantic may be used as a certain case in point. Something else to which I would draw the House's attention is the difficulty in forecasting the activity among cod stocks. We have seen recently, within the past couple of years, that scientific proposals put forward in the 1970s may not be accurate now, and the fish we thought were there in the beginning may not in fact be there. I make the point that although we have gone a long way in Canada and can be proud of the work our scientists have done, there is still some way to go.

In recent discussions with Canadian scientists I was told that there is a certain initial breakthrough in the technology that will indeed look beneath the surface of the water and forecast what is happening with respect to marine life. That is very important. It will be of great consequence for Canada, particularly for the East Coast fishing industry if we can do that.

I make the point that Radarsat is a great achievement but there is still some way to go and I hope we will continue to work on that. Certainly the committee concurs in that as a top priority and the Government has responded in kind.

The other issue I want to deal with is the space station itself. Here I think there is a divergence of opinion between what the Government has done, and is doing, what I understood the committee to recommend and, certainly, the view of my colleagues in the Liberal Party. The Government historically has been negotiating with the Americans for a role in the space station, as have the Europeans and other countries. But that negotiation has been fraught with difficulties all the way along, mainly and primarily over the use of that space station.

We in the Liberal Party have taken the position all along that Canada should participate in the space station only if it is used for peaceful purposes and only if there is no military use