

Oil Tanker Route

which might be more acceptable under the terms of Standing Order 43, for instance. Then there is the possibility of discussion during the budget debate. There are other procedural avenues open to hon. members. If it could be arranged, it would be much better for hon. members to debate this lively issue under another Standing Order rather than under Standing Order 43 or on a question of privilege.

I have always hesitated, and still hesitate, to agree that the conduct or statements of hon. members—for example, the statement made by the hon. member for York South or the statement by the right hon. member for Prince Albert—ought to be put to the scrutiny of a committee of the House. I cannot believe this is the unanimous wish of hon. members. I would still hope that through consultation hon. members might find among themselves a way of resolving this matter. For the moment I think nothing would be gained by my ruling that there is a prima facie case of privilege and suggesting that there be a debate on the subject from this moment on. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

• (1440)

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The only contribution that I want to make is to say something to Your Honour about whether there is in fact, in our judgment, a prima facie case of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member is allowed to do that, all hon. members would be allowed to and we would effectively have the debate that I suggest ought not to be had. The practice of the House is very clear. The Chair hears the hon. member who rises on the proposed question of privilege, and it has been the practice of the House, respected very generously, I might say, by hon. members, that the hon. member whose conduct and statements are referred to essentially by the proposed question of privilege is allowed to reply, as has been the case today. Certainly we would be embarking upon a dangerous course if, in addition to such statements, we allowed the hon. member for Greenwood and another 10, 15 or 20 members to speak to the question of privilege and to indicate why they think there is or is not a prima facie case. I do not think the hon. member should be allowed to do that.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, naturally I accept Your Honour's ruling but I thought that Your Honour had asked for advice on the point of privilege. I did not intend to join in any debate, which Your Honour has ruled is not acceptable at the present time, but I did want to make to Your Honour some observations on the point of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: I am suggesting that that is contrary to the practice of the House. I would earnestly suggest to hon. members that I do not think this kind of contribution made by the hon. member for Greenwood or by other hon. members would be helpful to the Chair.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I think it would be helpful to the House if we knew whether or not Your Honour has decided that the hon. member for York South does have a prima facie case of privilege, or

whether Your Honour is postponing the matter and will give a decision later.

Mr. Speaker: I thought I had indicated that. I indicated that I should like to take the matter into consideration. I thought I also indicated that I had serious reservations about ruling that there was a prima facie case of privilege. As I have said, I have always had doubts as to the advisability of sending a matter where the conduct of a member is impugned to a committee of the House. I may be wrong, but to my mind I feel that the moment there is a prima facie question of privilege that is, in a way, a reflection upon an hon. member. This is why I have hesitation in saying that we should proceed on that basis.

I am not going to make a decision now. I am taking into account the fact that there have been discussions among hon. members and I am hoping some way can be found, if it is the desire of hon. members, to have a further debate on the matter. I trust that in the hours or days ahead some resolution along those lines may be arrived at as a result of consultations inspired by good will.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

First and second reports of Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence—Mr. Wahn.

[*Editors's Note: For text of above reports, see today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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OIL

PROPOSED TAPS TANKER ROUTE—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I desire to move a motion pursuant to Standing Order 43 on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. My motion relates to the decision made yesterday by the House to communicate its concern about the movement of oil in tankers down the coast of British Columbia to the government of the United States. Therefore, apropos, of that I move, seconded by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett):

That this House authorizes the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry to conduct an examination of the proposal to move oil by tanker from Valdez Bay in Alaska to Cherry Point in Washington with a view to developing and preparing supporting evidence relative to the concern expressed by this House on May 15, 1972, on the question of the said oil tanker route in order that such supporting evidence may also be transmitted to the government of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have heard the motion proposed under the terms of Standing Order 43. Does the House give unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.