

would be glad to hear him. Let us consider the latest example in British Columbia, in connection with the railway, to supply coal to Japan, some five million tons a year. What is this government doing about that? Is this coal going to travel over Canadian railroads? I suggest it will do nothing of the kind. A United States outfit will carry the coal from the coalbeds, through the U.S.A. to dock facilities furnished by the people of Canada at tremendous expense, and in this way export thousands of Canadian jobs.

When I asked for some action what answer did I get? I was told the government was looking into it, giving it consideration. While they are considering it, we are disposing of our resources of coal and losing jobs for Canadians. I do not want to say anything more about the oil situation because I am in entire agreement with what has been said by my colleagues. What I have tried to do is see whether it would be possible to dislodge this government from its inertia and from its sitting position, from where it makes its greatest contribution, and get it to act for Canada.

The speech just concluded by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the former minister of defence, was one of defeatism and fear. He said the things he wanted to say in order to evade what should have been said. I am sorry if the election is to be postponed until 1973 because the time has come for Canadians, if they would preserve our heritage, to have a change of government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I join the debate on the motion of the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle) by complimenting him for introducing a tremendously important motion which has occasioned this important debate. Any motion which draws the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) into debate is one worth making. The House always enjoys his pungent comments whether or not one agrees with them. We listened with great interest and amusement to the right hon. gentleman.

Yesterday and today the leader of the NDP described the proposing of this motion and the debate thereon as a game, as trickery. I will come back to that matter in a minute. The right hon. gentleman for Prince Albert said we were playing politics, that we have lost the freedom of the House and that motions under Standing Order 43 amount to nothing, are never consented to and never reach the stage of debate.

• (1540)

Let me place on the record the fact that motions under Standing Order 43 moved by the opposition have been debated in the House and voted on. There was one by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) on the Public Service Commission's annual report. There was one from the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) under Standing Order 43 which was voted on by this House. Unanimous consent was given by the government to its presentation to the House. It was on a somewhat related subject, the west coast tanker route.

A motion under Standing Order 43 was made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), who is not in his

Oil Pollution

place today, relating to Biafra. It was presented to the House and voted on. I appreciate why the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert would be unaware of motions made by the leader of the Conservative party. I understand neither of them pays too much attention to what the other is doing. That motion of the Leader of the Opposition was moved and voted on. What the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert says is really not correct. When a motion is well put and well directed, the government consents to its presentation to the House and supports it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: When the discussion will not be embarrassing to the government.

Mr. Basford: Members of the opposition say that motions presented on this subject were not allowed. Let us look at those motions. On Tuesday, the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) presented a motion to the effect that a committee look at the oil spill. I do not think we need another committee looking at it. The hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) presented a motion on Tuesday relating to federal action to clean up the spill. Action had been taken. Anything provided for in the motion was being dealt with. On Wednesday another motion was presented under Standing Order 43 by the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock, inviting the United States Secretary of the Interior to look at the oil spill. I am not sure that would have been very useful. Let us get something going, rather than just travelling around looking at things.

Again, on Wednesday the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) presented a motion to the effect that another committee should look at the oil spill and report back to the House. In my view that would not be of much use. Then on Thursday along came the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle) who for the first time presented a motion that the matter relating to the international aspect of the problem be dealt with by the IJC. This was a very positive and useful type of motion. If some member of the opposition had moved a similar type of motion on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday there would have been no withholding of consent from this side. It would have been presented to the House and, I am sure, carried.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) seeks the floor.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Yes, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of asking a question. Would the minister permit a question?

Mr. Basford: Yes.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Is he overlooking the fact that on Tuesday, when the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) presented his motion, he asked as point (c) that what has happened be drawn forcefully to the attention of the government of the United States. What was wrong with that? How does it differ from what is now before the House?