

Oil Pollution

motion is not the same as the one now before us, but let me continue because that was not the only motion moved last Tuesday. As recorded at the same page of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) moved the following motion:

(a) That this House approve immediate federal action to help clean up and protect the affected area; (b) to provide that no economic loss be suffered by the people of that area; and (c) that what has happened be drawn forcefully to the attention of the government of the United States as constituting a small sample of the inevitable ecological dangers and disasters that will follow the transportation of oil by tanker along our western coast.

Again, when unanimous consent was requested by the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock to put the motion, Liberals members denied the unanimous consent that was necessary. We do not stop there, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday, June 7, a further motion was made by the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding), who as reported at page 2924 of *Hansard* moved:

That a message be sent to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence requesting it to proceed forthwith to the west coast to carry out an investigation of the oil spill at Cherry Point and to report back to the House.

Again the same thing: the motion was not urgent and it was not of pressing public necessity at that time, at least to the Liberals.

Mr. Peters: There is another one just above that.

Mr. Nielsen: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker; it has been drawn to my attention that there is another motion, again moved by the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock, to the following effect:

That this House invite the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Rogers Morton and the director of the U.S. National Environmental Control Program, Mr. William Richelshaus, to visit the afflicted area and to see, at first hand, a small sample of the inevitable desecration of the west coast which will result from the proposed shipment of Alaska oil by tankers to Cherry Point.

I have referred to four motions made on two successive days which the Liberal government, including the hon. member for Fraser Valley East, did not consider urgent. Then suddenly they do consider the motion urgent today. The hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour sheds crocodile tears and hurls charges across the House of political partisanship entering into this debate. Of what use is rule 43? We on this side of the House are denied unanimous consent to use rule 43 to bring a matter such as this repeatedly to the attention of the government. Yet is it for lack of partisanship that the government permits the hon. member for Fraser Valley East to bring his motion today? Or is it because of some deal that exists between the government and B.C. members as a whole?

I suggest that, as it is, rule 43 has become a farce. It is absolutely useless. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East moves this innocuous motion, following upon the heels of the statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The hon. member moves:

That in the light of the damage in Canada and the United States arising from the recent oil spill at the Cherry Point refinery this House support the urgency of a reference to the International Joint Commission of the environmental consequences of the movement of oil in the narrow waters of the Straits of Juan de Fuca, Georgia Strait, and Puget Sound both now and in the future and of the measures necessary to minimize the hazards, and

[Mr. Nielsen.]

requests the Secretary of State for External Affairs to immediately convey the terms of this motion to the government of the United States.

All of this has been said in the four previous motions, if they are taken collectively. All these urgings have been made to the Secretary of State for External Affairs by members of the opposition. Indeed, the very substance of the motion by the hon. member for Fraser Valley East was contained in the statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs made just a few minutes before the motion—yet hon. members on the other side speak about political partisanship!

• (1620)

Mr. Sharp: We want the support of the whole House to what I said.

Mr. Nielsen: It is sheer hypocrisy, and the minister knows that what happened today has reduced the proceedings of this House to a mere sham, a mere mockery.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: That is why I say this is a government in disarray. If the truth were known, the government House leader had his own cleverness backfire on him. Obviously, there is not going to be a motion under Standing Order 43 accepted in this House unless the government House leader gives the green light, and no one is going to deny the probability or inevitability of such a motion being agreed to by the government before it is even put. The minister outsmarted himself, because he did not figure the Social Credit party would react in the way it did, by attempting to get us back to orders of the day. This government, in order to be consistent, had to vote against that motion though it dearly would have loved to get back to orders. The government found itself in a box.

Mr. Sharp: So did you.

Mr. Nielsen: At least we were consistent: we voted for the urgency of the subject matter of the debate, just as the government did and, incidentally, just as the Social Credit party did. For them to move a motion that would get back to orders of the day after having agreed with the urgency of the debate was just as inconsistent as what the government did. The government has embarrassed itself: it was caught up in its own cleverness in its attempt to manoeuvre and use this House for its own political purposes. That is exactly what it was doing because its B.C. members were on the hook. The government is making a caricature of this House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, they laugh; the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Hogarth) laughs at this.

Mr. Hogarth: Coming from you, I laugh at it.

Mr. Nielsen: Let the hon. member laugh at this. Here we have a government that says it is doing everything possible about the oil spill on the west coast. It says it is being vigorous in making representations to the United States, yet one of its own B.C. members, the hon. member for