

• (2:40 p.m.)

Mr. Stanfield: Following that indication to the government of Canada, did the Secretary of State for External Affairs communicate with the Prime Minister—I am not asking for the disclosure of any confidence—with a view to making additional representations to the President of the United States in view of the concern expressed in the House and in Canada?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It so happened that I was sitting beside the Prime Minister when I received the news from our ambassador in Washington and I immediately communicated, on the basis of our joint agreement, with Secretary Rogers and expressed our deep regrets and the great concern that the people of Canada would have at this decision of the President.

AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TEST—ADVANCE NOTICE OF
EXPLOSION—PRECAUTIONS IN CASE OF TIDAL WAVE

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether the Canadian government is expecting to receive any advance notice of the precise time and date of the Amchitka explosion, or will we have the approximately one and a half hours' notice that we have had in the case of the announcement of the decision to proceed?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the announcement that has been made indicates that they are planning for a date around November 3 or 4. I do expect, of course, that the United States government itself will be giving sufficient notice so that ships and others can be out of the way of danger when the explosion takes place.

Mr. Rose: I understand that Governor Eagan of Alaska is considering seeking from the United States government the stationing of ships along the coast as a safety precaution and for rescue purposes. Can the minister tell the House whether Canada has made any similar contingency plans for coastline protection, because all of us will recall the damage that the tidal wave caused the city of Alberni only a few years ago?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that I quite understand the purpose of the question. The preparations that the state of Alaska is apparently talking about concern the stationing of ships. I would not have thought that the stationing of ships would prevent a tidal wave.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a supplementary?

Mr. Rose: For purposes of clarification, Mr. Speaker. In the event that tidal waves cause difficulties in coastal cities in Alaska, I understand that the governor is requesting certain naval or marine safety precautions to be taken in case there are problems with flooding and damage caused by tidal waves. What I am asking is precisely whether Canada has considered any similar coastline protection for coastal cities and, if so, what is it?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the specific answer to that question is no, and I doubt very much whether, if there were a tidal wave of this proportion, anything more than warning could be given. This kind of warning has now been given. We hope it does not happen and the danger does seem to be very minimal, but if it does happen I just say "Let us pray".

* * *

POWER

PROPOSED JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT—
POSSIBLE USE OF NUCLEAR BLASTING FOR
EXCAVATION PURPOSES

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question related to the whole question of nuclear testing and nuclear blasts, and I direct it to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can the minister say whether he is aware of the statement made recently by Robert A. Boyd, commissioner of Hydro-Quebec, reported in the *Ottawa Journal* on October 23 last, in relation to the planned James Bay power project, that excavation using nuclear explosions is one of the many areas being explored by planners of the project, and what does the government plan to do in light of that statement?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this is not a question that ought to be directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I would suggest it be directed to one of my colleagues who is far more concerned with internal affairs.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member might redirect his question, but my impression is that with this supplementary we may have gotten away somewhat from the original question and I gather there are direct supplementaries that hon. members are seeking to put. Having asked the question the hon. member might be allowed to redirect it, and we will then return to the original subject.

Mr. Simpson: I direct my supplementary to the Minister of the Environment. Is the minister aware of the statement of Mr. Robert A. Boyd to which I have just referred, and has the government taken any action in light of this recent statement?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am not personally aware of this statement. I might add in respect of an earlier question that our scientists and seismologists have indicated that the chance of a tidal wave resulting from the Amchitka blast is extremely remote.

* * *

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SUGGESTED LETTER TO UNITED STATES SENATORS AND
REPRESENTATIVES WHO OPPOSE AMCHITKA NUCLEAR
TEST

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.