

Oil Pollution

have been written elsewhere and then leave, satisfied with their capacity of being able to read that which others had prepared.

The minister, in order to show the celerity, assiduity and dedication of the government, said, in effect, "Do not say we have not done anything." Then he said, "Why, last June 10, one year ago tomorrow, we sent a memo to the government of the United States." The minister then said, "We were not satisfied with that." Apparently they received no reply. On August 29 this was followed by another memo.

• (1510)

Apparently the United States government paid no attention whatsoever to the representations of the Canadian government which today is not very highly regarded by the administration of the United States.

Mr. Pepin: That is not true.

Mr. Diefenbaker: If the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) wants to interrupt, I will have a message for him. I do not want to deliver it because I do not feel this is the afternoon when I should. However, if he starts dancing around, as he does from time to time when problems are placed before him, I shall have to deal with him. I would not disturb the equanimity of the minister, but his record in the past few months in connection with United States trade matters has been so completely devoid of any effective action that I am surprised he even makes an appearance here as one of the two ministers present. He is 50 per cent of the government now.

Mr. Pepin: I will discuss that record with you at any time.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I do want to hear his words of wisdom. On March 20 there was a meeting with the Secretary of the Interior of the United States. All that the minister who just finished speaking did was prove that this government writes notes but does not do anything effectively beyond that. Indeed, some of those notes were stated to have been very effective, and in the month of February the Prime Minister, speaking of the dangers of pollution, said Canada has contingency plans ready for anything. Today we find there were no contingency plans. All we have had is a series of letters to Washington; they call them aides memoire—to aid the memory of the United States with regard to Canada's position, with no action being taken.

We then had the visit of the President of the United States and the United States Secretary of State. They came to Ottawa. They heard, they listened, they saw, they went back to Washington, and nothing was done. Warnings have been given over and over again in this House with regard to the dangers of oil pollution, but in Your Honour's independent position as Acting Speaker of the House you must have recognized the dilatory manner in which this government carries out its responsibilities. Naturally, I do not expect from Your Honour an answer to that suggestion.

I have very high regard for the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle). Mind you, I do not suspect in the slightest that what he produced had been worked out

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

across the way by the government. Not at all. He is a man who has a feel for what the government is thinking: this results in his being able to achieve something that no member on this side of the House has been able to achieve.

Mr. Basford: That is not true.

Mr. Diefenbaker: There was just one case. I am referring to moving adjournments under Standing Order 43 for the purpose of discussing matters of signal importance. The hon. member has a 1,000 per cent record. No other member of this House has that. He moved a motion to provide for some words that had allegedly been spoken by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), and it received unanimous support.

Mr. Nielsen: Immediately.

Mr. Diefenbaker: When he brought forward that motion, it received unanimous support.

Mr. Nielsen: Immediately.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I should like to enlist the hon. member. He is sitting on the other side of the House; he is not with us but he is of us. From now on, when we have a motion that is serious in its import and ought to be considered, may we count on him as an ally to move it? That is the only way in which members of the opposition can bring anything before Parliament under Standing Order 43.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: He is powerful, and I believe in paying tribute where it is due. On June 6 a similar motion was moved by the hon. member for Egmont. That is recorded at page 2879 of *Hansard*. When that motion was moved, Mr. Speaker said that the motion required unanimous consent. When he asked if there was unanimous consent, the Hallelujah chorus opposite said no. A little later the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather) moved a motion. The speaker said:

There is not unanimity. The motion cannot be put.

Again the Hallelujah chorus of members supporting the government said no. On June 7 the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock again introduced a motion. Again there was no unanimity.

Mr. Nielsen: The Liberals refused it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: On the same day, the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding) moved a motion, with the same result.

Mr. Pepin: Don't interrupt him.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That shows the cruel farce of the new rules. Some hon. members sitting around me thought I was mistaken when I told them that if the rule changes were accepted, such rules would stultify the House of Commons and crucify Parliament. That is what has happened.

Can you imagine the House of Commons dealing with one of the most serious matters facing this country with