

Simply moving with this item at the present time, although not a bad one, is not sufficient to remove the doubts in the minds of many Canadians and Americans about that particular crash and about airline safety generally. Indeed, the very prestigious US magazine, *Aviation Week Space and Technology* on February 6, 1989, was asking for exactly what my colleagues and I in the Liberal Party have been asking for, which is a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Gander air crash.

I want to conclude, Madam Speaker, by once again making this formal request to the Government across the way to institute immediately a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the most tragic event ever to have occurred on Canadian soil, the most tragic air crash which killed 256 people. I mean of course the Gander air crash of December 12, 1985.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Questions or comments?

Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River): I wish to compliment the previous speaker on the very sensitive and eloquent manner in which he raised the important details of a very tragic accident. He noted questions that still have to be answered concerning that accident. I would like to inquire if his remarks included a concern for other transportation safety matters that a number of Members in this House have raised. One is the matter of proper inquiries into oil spills. I know that his Party has shown concern and been very vocal on this. I would point to the question of the four serious oil spills off the coast of Vancouver Island, most notably the one through December and January and the response of the Government to that. Most of the organized communities and citizens who live there are demanding that the Government implement a public inquiry into it.

I would certainly like it to know whether the Member agrees with the citizens and communities on the need for that public inquiry and possibly an expanded role for a transportation and accident investigation group on the oil spill question.

One more item that I would like to have him comment on is the oil spill in December and January which washed up on Long Beach Park. The Government was not prepared to do anything in terms of an investigation, inquiry, and recommendations, until it washed up on a national park. They are still cleaning it up. The Government has withdrawn many of its resources, but it did give a substantial contract to the Nuuchahnulth Tribal

Transportation Accident Investigation Board

Council for beach-walking programs and clean-up programs that are still going on. That of course extends from Sooke to the Brooks Peninsula on Vancouver Island. But they denied the Kwagwelth Tribal Council to monitor their beaches and undertake the same kind of clean-up. Clearly the issue is that the Kwagwelth people, although they depend on the food and resources that are on those beaches, do not luckily have a national park there. Unfortunately because they don't have the national park, their resources can be spoiled and coated with oil. Yet the Nachalnov people, because it did include the park, were given a substantial government contract to find that oil and clean it up so that the damage does not occur.

I wonder if the Member would be in a position to comment on the equity of that type of situation in addition to the response. In particular does he support the call for a public inquiry into protection, prevention, and the necessity for proper investigation of oil spills off the West Coast of the Island?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for his question. Of course, when we are talking about toxic spills, whether they involve oil or other products, the federal Government must act when it has jurisdictional authority.

[*English*]

It is not good enough either, Madam Speaker, to pretend that we get an undertaking from someone in the corporate sector that in the unlikely event that there is a spill, that they will make sure to clean it up. Surely the Valdez incident would tell us that those kinds of undertakings are sometimes not worth the paper they are written on. If that particular incident has demonstrated anything to us, it is that not only must the rules be there, but that we should ensure that those who are charged with the application and the follow-up on those rules have the necessary equipment to do it.

In fact it was quite obvious after some hours that, first, the Exxon Corporation in that case did not really have much of a will to do anything in the beginning. Secondly, when they did muster the will necessary, that they in fact could not get the equipment there on time. Had they been able to get the equipment there on time much of the damage, which will be felt for years to come, could have been alleviated.