

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 4:24 p.m.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking my colleagues in the House, the Clerks at the table and yourself for assisting me in moving to put these amendments to the House for consideration.

I move:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-39 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 19 at page 3, the following:

“(3) The Governor in Council shall, in making regulations pursuant to paragraphs 2(c) and (d), take into account:

(a) the need to facilitate the creation of comprehensive and coherent management regimes for environment, wildlife and resource use in offshore areas;

(b) any land, environment, wildlife or resource management regimes provided for in a land claims agreement which may pertain to a particular offshore area, or any adjacent offshore or land area; and

(c) any use and occupancy of offshore areas by aboriginal peoples and any areas of overlapping use by several aboriginal peoples.”

To provide a very brief explanation, this amendment and the third one which I will move if the second one passes, requires the federal government to take environmental and aboriginal interests and concerns into account before making regulations under their respective sections.

These are not great laws but they have important symbolic value. There is a principle of sustainability that policy at all levels in all areas must be considered in light of environmental needs.

We had excellent representations from the aboriginal peoples of northern Canada, the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec and the Makivik Corporation, to name two, who are concerned that this law would inadvertently take away from them something that is of great concern and they ask for this kind of protection in the legislation.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, as we indicated earlier in discussion, this bill is being considered on very short, although legal, notice. The member of the Official Opposition, the member for Moncton, who has participated and has taken a great interest in

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this bill, happens not to be in Ottawa today and I am speaking on his behalf.

This is an amendment that we think should be supported. It is an amendment that emphasizes policy considerations relating to the environment and the doctrine of sustainable development.

On behalf of the opposition I agree with this amendment.

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to repeat all the arguments I made at committee concerning this issue, but one of the points I made was that the term “take into account” is very vague. I am not quite sure what it is this motion would ask the Governor in Council to do.

I understand that it is important to recognize the environmental dimension whenever we are talking about our offshore, but I will indicate to the House what I indicated in committee. The Canadian Environmental Protection Act which was passed by this government is far more effective, has more teeth and I think would be more effective to accomplish what the hon. member wants to accomplish.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion No. 1 (Mr. Angus) negatived.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I move:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-39 be amended in Clause 5 by adding immediately after line 44 at page 4, the following:

“(4) For greater certainty, the provisions of this section shall not be interpreted as limiting the application of the Canada Labour Code.”

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate, on behalf of the Official Opposition, that this is a clarification which we consider to be in the right direction and we are in favour of it.