

Government Organization Act, 1970

reversed the position and made an attempt to gain continued interest in investment in the resource development of Canada by American capitalists.

If all goes well the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry will become the minister responsible for the environment. He has made speeches in various parts of Canada which seem to be selective in so far as they choose little bits from the statements of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Let us get our stories straight in the House of Commons on this peaceful Friday afternoon. Here is a golden opportunity for the minister to sort out some of the contradictions and confusion in government policy that is having untold harmful effects upon the economy of Canada.

There are others who have entered the debate. The premier of Quebec made a visit to New York recently in an apparent attempt to offset some of the harmful effects of the speech of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in Denver which had tended to cut off investment in the province of Quebec. A recent editorial in the *Winnipeg Free Press* of March 24 outlining the difficulties commented, "The troubled Canadian economy has been suffering from an accumulation of uncertainties concerning government policy." Let me re-emphasize that any resource development has for its final objective the development of the economy of Canada. We cannot have a consistent or co-ordinated policy unless the government speaks with one voice. The debate on tax reform has been going on for 16 months and has brought disastrous results to the economy.

The Deputy Chairman: I regret to advise the hon. member that his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Deputy Chairman: Is it the wish of the House that the hon. member shall extend his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Dinsdale: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and hon. members. I shall endeavour to bring my remarks to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

I want to make one further fundamental point. We are debating in the abstract if we think that the policy of resource development is linked to any consideration but the economic potential of this country. We have to rationalize, we have to organize, we have to end the confusion that has been rampant as a result of the lack of leadership from the spokesmen for the government of Canada.

Now that you have extended my time, Mr. Chairman, I should like to spend a few moments on the most urgent aspect of resource development. I refer, of course, to the situation that has developed with respect to northern oil and gas in the past two years, particularly since the Americans brought in oil at Prudhoe Bay. Canada has lost the initiative here because we were exploring the high Arctic area as early as 1961, before the Americans. We were on Melville Island drilling what it was hoped

was an oil well to a depth of 1,500 feet. This drilling proved that the geology of the high Arctic was favourable to oil development. This is a story of Canadian initiative that has still to be told because the initial exploration met with a lot of resistance and criticism. It was 100 per cent a Canadian operation spearheaded by Dome Petroleum and some of the minor oil interests of Canada.

Three fundamental problems emerged as a result of that pioneer effort in 1961. Had Canada come to grips with them as they emerged, as a government providing vigorous leadership in the resource area should have dealt with them, we would be in a much better position to come up with solutions today. I refer to the three problems of transportation, protection of the ecology and sovereignty. All these matters have had major public attention in the media during the last year as a result of the oil find at Prudhoe Bay on the Alaskan slopes. Research was going on in the early sixties regarding the transportation of resources out of the north. This included such far out ideas as the "big wheel", submarine transportation, tanker transportation and the possibility of a pipeline. Judging from the lack of certainty on the part of the government today, this research into transportation facilities must have died shortly after 1963 because everything that is mentioned now is of a crash, ad hoc nature.

No research material has been brought before this House by which members can judge the wisdom of the current approach of the government to northern development. The minister has been asked time and again to table the results of research so that the situation can be properly evaluated. Because of delay in implementing the findings of the Resources for Tomorrow Conference of 1962, we are now extemporizing solutions to environmental problems of northern resource development rather than operating on the basis of information that should have been available had the policy initiative continued through the decade of the sixties.

• (2:30 p.m.)

The question of sovereignty, of course, is one which arose because of the epic voyage of the *Manhattan* back in 1969 and some confusing statements which emerged from the government, from the Prime Minister down. I should like to point out that the voyage of the *Thord* to Melville Island in 1961 was just as epic a voyage as that of the *Manhattan*, because this was a much smaller vessel which got the drilling crews and their outfits through to Melville Island in time for the winter drilling of 1961-62. That voyage did not arouse any concern at all because at that time the general sentiment in Canada was that it was a bit of a nightmare to ever conceive that there might be an oil potential in the Canadian high Arctic. The only real initiative in dealing with the sovereignty question came from the committee on northern development which travelled to Resolute Bay. That committee, in no uncertain terms, suggested to the government a policy by which Canada declared that this entire area was under Canadian control and jurisdiction.

[Mr. Dinsdale.]