

It is truly a political and economic disaster for our country that after almost ten years of legal proceedings between the two provinces, the stalemate is complete. God knows that both provinces suffer from a high level of unemployment at present. God knows that both provinces could gain from the economic activity brought about by those developments. I am thinking at any rate of Quebec where the James Bay development project is somewhat idling, where there are fewer workers than in the past, while many of them could undoubtedly find employment on North Shore rivers or even on the Churchill River. I am thinking, of course, of the large number of unemployed in Newfoundland who could also benefit from jobs created under an agreement between both governments and the carrying out of those huge hydroelectric development projects.

• (1620)

[English]

I will conclude by saying that I hope and pray the two governments will agree to get together and go back to the negotiating table to try and arrive at a deal which would cover the whole question of the existing contract between Newfoundland and Quebec about the Upper Churchill development, the Lower Churchill development as well as the development of the North Shore rivers. I believe the citizens of Newfoundland and Quebec would greatly benefit by such an agreement.

Bill C-108 does not deal only with these specific powers that we want to grant to the National Energy Board; it amends a number of other sections of the National Energy Board Act. One of my colleagues will explain those amendments in greater detail to the House, or I will do so in committee or at third reading. However, I would like to go over some of them quickly.

The amendment which removes from the board's jurisdiction the power to determine oil and natural gas export prices and gives it to the governor in council is quite understandable. The almost constant fluctuation in prices on the international scene has made this question a highly political one. It is, therefore, up to the political authority of this country to assume responsibility for it and not leave it with a quasi-judicial body.

Another amendment gives authority to the board to allocate oil and gas supplies to the various regions of the country. The objective, which is very simple, is to provide for future situations where Canadian oil demand might slightly exceed available supplies. Of course, the situation need not be a crisis. However, simple fairness demands that the board have the power to enable it to deal with an equitable allocation of the available resources between shippers, between provinces and among producers or producing areas.

Those, Mr. Speaker, are the principal amendments we are proposing to the National Energy Board Act. I would like to repeat that the amendments we are asking this House to approve will help accelerate the implementation of certain

### *National Energy Board Act (No. 3)*

elements of the National Energy Program, which is essential if we are to achieve energy security. This objective is vital to the wellbeing and future prosperity of Canadians, and I am certain that with the help of all Canadians there will be no let up in our pursuit of it. I will be very happy to appear before the special committee of this House which has been set up to hear the views of hon. members and to discuss the content of this particular bill with them.

• (1630)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Dubois)—Energy—Inquiry whether Quebec percentage of gasoline tax is greater than percentage collected by Alberta; the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. McMillan)—Finance—Processing of income tax returns. (b) Delay in payment of refunds; the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen)—Emergency Measures—Limits of Crown prerogative. (b) Avenues of redress.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD ACT (NO. 3)

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Lalonde that Bill C-108, to amend the National Energy Board Act (No. 3), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Energy Legislation.

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, after the many speeches and bills on energy resources, I could not remain silent with respect to this bill which is so important to a province like Quebec and, of course, to the rest of Canada as well.

I listened very attentively to the minister's presentation, which I found both very straightforward and very interesting. However, there is one comment I must make right away. The minister was comparing electric power to natural gas, and he implied that carrying natural gas or oil or whatever by pipeline is similar to the transmission of electric power. If I remember correctly, the procedures for establishing this method of supply from west to east were determined with the agreement of the