

bou in the north. This question affects the entire Indian and Eskimo populations. Who is in charge of this? Who is doing it? How long has it been under way? How many men are in the field? I must speak out, Mr. Chairman, and emphasize that the native peoples in the northern part of Canada have every right to make certain that this Parliament protects their right to earn a livelihood in the part of the country in which they have lived for generations. We must not forget this fact. Has the minister any plans if it is found that there will be caused tremendous disturbance and upset for the people concerned?

We know that economic development is now going on in the north, without any land use regulations. It is hard to imagine a government carrying on economic development that could destroy the ecology, without laying down strict regulations. Land use regulations have not been brought in by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and no one knows the type of land use regulations that will be introduced in respect of gas and oil exploitation in the north. I say that this is a disgraceful situation.

• (3:40 p.m.)

We are told that when the regulations are brought in they will cover only about 5 per cent of the main mining areas, and the remainder will be open. If this is so, I tell the minister that it will be one of the most stupid steps the government could take. Every bit of oil drilling and gas exploration which is going on in the north should be under strict government regulation. It is our duty to protect the whole of Canada. It is our duty to protect the natural environment in which our northern inhabitants live.

We are not saying exploration in the north should be stopped, but we are saying that this government should produce the regulations so we can see where we are going, what the government intends to do and how much freedom exploiters of our natural resources will have when they start to dig for the natural resources which rightfully belong to the Canadian people. Over the years we have experienced enough government delay, delay and delay until it is too late. We have had an example of this in the southern part of Canada, where our lakes are polluted and where in many areas we have made a sewer out of the air until it is not fit to breathe.

We say it is time that the north, which is relatively unpolluted, was protected. It is said that one learns by experience and what has happened in the past. I suggest it is time now, in 1971, that we realized this and made sure that when we move in these new areas pollution does not occur over and over again.

**The Chairman:** Order, please. I apologize to the hon. member, but I must interrupt to advise him that his time has expired. The hon. member indicates he would like to continue. He may do so only if there is unanimous consent. Is there such consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Harding:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I shall take only another 30 seconds or so. There is one more question

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

I wish to pose to the minister. Last week the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry suggested that the new Department of the Environment should have the power of veto in respect of environmental problems in the north. I ask the minister whether he agrees with this and whether he would support a move to have this power written into the legislation covering the new Department of the Environment or into another appropriate statute.

**Mr. Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand):** Mr. Chairman, I rise to say a few words about a great natural resource of Canada which has been touched upon this afternoon but has not been mentioned specifically. When one flies over this great country of ours one is struck by the great potential of our water resources in the form of lakes and rivers, some of which are unpolluted and many of which are polluted. I wish to speak about both.

We must ask ourselves how we can derive the best use of this great natural resource. Today people talk about selling it to the United States. They say we have more water than we can use in the foreseeable future, and that therefore we should sell it. In this sense there are many questions one might raise. First, I think we should take a hard look at the present and future needs of Canadians. It would be simple to establish a system of canals and waterways in order to get the water to the United States. In other words, we could turn on the tap—but once the tap has been opened, the question is how to shut it off if we should wish to do so.

From an agricultural point of view, I think we should remember that one of the prime uses to which the water would be put in the United States is in the irrigation of farmland in arid areas of the United States midwest, where crops could then be produced which would be competitive with those of western Canada and, indeed, of all parts of Canada. So let us be very careful before we enter into agreements to sell our water to the great nation to our south.

I shall now come closer to the area I represent, namely, the Great Lakes area. There we have a great water system which bears the commerce of the world into the heartland of North America. Along it has been developed, at ever-increasing speed, a great industrial corridor which many people have referred to as the Ruhr of North America. This resource will continue to be used for that purpose whether or not it is polluted, unless the water becomes so thick that ships cannot pass through it.

This great waterway of central Canada is also an important source of supply to the municipalities which have grown up along it. The purity of the water is most important in this regard. Obviously, if the water is polluted, the municipalities and industrial plants can become involved in very great expense in respect of purification. There are many industrial plants along the shoreline of the Great Lakes. One example is the hydro-generating plant at Nanticoke, which will be one of the largest in Ontario when completed. Water will be taken from Lake Erie for this plant not only for the generation of steam but also to be used as a coolant. The water will be discharged into the lake again at a temperature several degrees higher than that at which it was taken in, and