

*Government Orders*

technology and expertise to Canada's resource industries and to countries around the world.

For example, we can receive images at the Prince Albert satellite receiving station, a world class Canadian built facility, which is located in Saskatchewan. Then we can digitize this information and use it in computer based tools to explore for new resources, to develop new mines or to monitor changes in our environment. Those are only a few of the uses of geomatics technology.

Let me move to the forestry sector, one of the single most important areas of Canada's industrial strength. In the forestry sector advanced technologies based on remote sensing and computer science are giving us new techniques for managing the forest resource and its ecosystems.

Canada has developed highly successful forest health monitoring systems including the forest insect and disease survey, a partnership between the federal and provincial governments and the acid rain national early warning system. Canada also leads the world in the development of forest fire danger rating systems and related decision support systems. These are just a few examples of the valuable partnerships that exist between government, industries and universities.

However the challenge is clear. We can no longer tackle problems in traditional ways and government must continue to find innovative solutions through our partnerships and through science and technology which is the key to progress toward sustainable development. My department, NRCAN, is in the process of drawing the road map for natural resources development in the 21st century. It is a map for success because of the consensus that we have achieved by bringing together key stakeholders in the resource sectors.

NRCAN is a major federal force behind science and technology and is the leading federal agency responsible for natural resource issues. These roles provide NRCAN with the capacity to help address the challenges industry faces and to contribute to the fulfilment of the government's policy priorities.

Increasingly the department's policy and science and technology efforts focus on two interrelated objectives, helping the resource industry to maintain its international competitiveness and doing so in a way that is environmentally sustainable. Together these two objectives capture the essence of the concept of sustainable development, the integration of economic and environmental objectives and values.

In conclusion, it was a pleasure to address the House this afternoon on the occasion of the third reading of Bill C-48, a bill

that will when enacted provide the legal framework for the new Department of Natural Resources.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will have to repeat a number of points I raised previously, since I find myself in the position of a teacher faced with a student who is the opposite of a quick study. This certainly does not apply to the minister but it does to her government.

They should start making a serious attempt at understanding what is at stake, because this is a very complex issue. Yesterday, we presented a number of amendments that I feel were entirely appropriate and justified, but they did not pass. They were defeated.

I will go back to what we proposed yesterday to explain why normally, these amendments should have been accepted by everyone.

We should recall that Bill C-48 was introduced as part of the present government's plan to restructure the federal public service. The purpose of the bill before the House today is to legislate the creation of the Department of Natural Resources. Once the bill is passed, one minister will have the powers and duties that today are vested in the ministers referred to in the Department of Forestry Act and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources Act. As far as this bill is concerned, obviously we cannot object to bringing Forestry and Energy, Mines and Resources together in a single department. Of course not.

As such, this is a laudable objective. Regrouping certain duties to provide a better service may be justified, provided they are ours to regroup. That would not seem to be the case when we are talking about natural resources. I will get back to this later on, because I feel the present government failed to take advantage of this opportunity to reach an understanding with Quebec and the other Canadian provinces.

I also feel that if this government had done what it should have done, today we would be able to say that it fully intends to respect its partners. That is not the case, and unfortunately, I see no sign of it in this bill. In fact, I see more duplication.

According to the bill before the House today, the term natural resources is applied to all resources mentioned in the Department of Forestry Act and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources Act. This means that anything connected with natural resources is affected by this bill.

Furthermore, and this is very important, the bill refers to integrated management and sustainable development, which we