

*S. O. 29*

from and in which my riding is located we have many people involved in the fur industry. It is not just a northern question.

Another aspect of this question is this: Where is the good in the issue of trapping and harvesting? I suggest that when it comes to using natural resources, the difference between use and abuse of a resource is again a question of balance. You have to balance your use against your need. If you look at aboriginal practices, history, and culture, it is easy to learn. Aboriginal people have historically taken from the land what was needed for sustenance; they have not done what we do today, rape the land and destroy the environment. If you take what you need from this planet, I suggest that what you are doing is good. That is not only true with respect to historic and traditional native values. It is also true in the western Christian tradition. The Bible says that we should take dominion over all of this. You name the animal. That is the theological, moral and spiritual basis for describing the taking of something for your own use and sustenance as good rather than evil.

There is another sense in which the question we are faced with today is one of balance. I want to speak about this historically and then in modern terms. Historically there is a question of balance between peoples. I think the Europeans are on the verge of repeating an historical mistake and once again doing an injustice to aboriginal peoples. It was the European demand for furs that created the fur industry in the first place. It was the European markets that disrupted the subsistence economy of North America. It was that market that made aboriginal peoples dependent upon European peoples. That led to undercutting the culture and way of life and spiritual values, which led to the destruction of the aboriginal way of life. That was started by the interaction among European peoples, markets, and aboriginal communities.

● (2210)

It was the tastes of Europe that led to the destruction of the aboriginal way of life. I am sure Europeans would not want to repeat that process because their tastes have changed and because someone thought that television advertising, through the effective use of propaganda, could sell the notion that it is wrong to wear fur, to trap and harvest animals. I ask Europeans to consider carefully their own history and to ask themselves whether they want to repeat the errors of the past.

The question of balance occurs in another way. As the Europeans look at the aboriginal peoples there are a couple of pictures to see—the pictures of trapping and of the animal suffering. People could conclude that that activity must stop because it is wrong for animals to suffer. I have already dealt with that question. I have dealt with the need to look at the other side of the coin, that is, what happens to the people. However, Europeans should look at the over-all behaviour of aboriginal peoples as they affect the environment, which is important to learn and observe. The aboriginal peoples have lived on this continent for a millennium and have preserved the environment. They have lived on this planet in harmony with the environment. Europeans should learn the values that

underlie the aboriginal way of life because we have need of those values today.

Let me turn to another point. What are we doing about preserving the Brazilian rain forests? How many McDonald's restaurants are there in Britain, and how many of those are labelled? We know that the Brazilian rain forests are destroyed to make way for massive ranches to raise cattle and have cheap beef that shows up in a fast food restaurants in the middle of London, England. That destruction alters our climate. The Europeans ought to focus on the relation between the aboriginal peoples and the environment. They should be asking questions. They should focus upon the important and big issues rather than look at things in a narrow context, forgetting that there are two sides to everything.

It is time to consider this issue and to study it in more depth. No one should rush into a decision responding to pressure campaigns that can be mounted by the electronic media.

Margaret Thatcher says that by labelling she is offering a kind of minimal response. But you can have labels and you can have labels, Mr. Speaker. The suggested label is to state that fur comes from animals that may have been caught by leg-hold traps, which is meant to project a negative image that what was done is bad. She says that the purpose is to provide information. Maybe the label ought to say that these animals have been harvested by trapping.

There are many kinds of labels and many ways to present information. Time should be taken to study the issue, to consult and reflect. Rather than responding to pressure, one should consider that by coming to a just decision one not only considers what happens to animals but what happens to people. One has to consider what happens in a remote northern community dependent upon fishing and trapping. What happens to that community if it no longer has the revenue from trapping? What happens to a community that already may have 60 per cent to 80 per cent unemployment and is deprived of its source of income? What happens to people who have no hope in their lives? One must consider not just animals but people as well, and take time to come to a reasoned conclusion as to what may or may not need to be done.

I hope Members of the British Parliament have an opportunity to see the record of this debate and that Great Britain's Prime Minister can take the time to consider her decision. If her objective is to provide people with information, she ought to consider what kind of labelling she is getting into. First, she needs to consider the over-all question of justice and morality and the whole question of trapping and making a living.

**Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this important debate this evening. The Parliament of Great Britain is referred to as the mother of Parliament by Canadians. We hope it will recognize the importance that Members of this House, representing three political Parties, place on this issue. We asked our Speaker to recognize the