

Canada Oil and Gas Act

step to make to change our mentality and our morality in government. It is overdue, and for two years, since I came here, I have had the impression that we talk about 12 countries. I wish we could speak of one country, of equal citizens. When the time comes for Canadian men and women to apply for a passport, they are glad to receive one with the name Canada on it. I think we should also be proud to have the same energy prices across the country and the same right to share our Canadian heritage. Mr. Speaker, I ask members of the opposition to answer the few questions I asked them, bearing in mind that we are one country and that we are Canadian men and women who are proud to be Canadians and to share our own wealth.

● (2020)

[English]

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Mr. Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interests to the remarks of the preceding speaker. I will not try to answer point by point some of the rhetorical and some of the substantive questions he asked. We must keep one thing clear. We do not have a nation or a country by preaching from the rooftops on the beauty from sea to sea. We do not have a nation or a country by hon. members standing in the House and saying "Let us all be homogeneous, let us forget history and start anew". I agree with the hon. member that Bill C-48 and its complementary bill, Bill C-57, which has already been disposed of in the House, is the two-pronged attack of the National Energy Program or the nationalized energy policy of the government, depending on what one wants to call it. This is the government's policy. There is no doubt that it is looking to the future.

It is ironic on July 13, in the doldrums of summer one day before Bastille Day that we are debating this bill. I have not heard the French try to change the name of Bastille Day because to do so would smack of something anti-historic for France. They are proud of some of their history. I can understand the argument about whether it should be Canada day or Dominion Day.

The hon. member spoke sincerely from his perspective, but one of the problems in the country is that members of Parliament and people of good faith, who keep talking about the quality and history of Canada and who want all the problems solved overnight by one act, forget the history of the land. There is nothing different personally between the hon. member and myself. There is a fundamental difference in our recognition of the history of this land.

I will not go into all the intricacies and complexities of Bill C-48. Once any speaker gets into the bill, it could take hours. Hon. members have debated this bill in committee. Obviously they have done much more detailed work than I because I was not a member of the committee. The speech of the hon. member for Manicouagan (Mr. Maltais) fits very well with what I wanted to say. I am not talking about the generality or the principle of this bill. I am not talking about sharing or redistributing the oil revenues, about oil companies making too much money, about Alberta being too greedy, about the

Quebec government taking Newfoundland to the cleaners on the James Bay contract, or about Joey Smallwood selling out part of the birthright of Newfoundlanders many years ago. Now Newfoundland wants to try to come in by the back door because it has lost by coming through the front door for 20-odd years. I will not deal with those matters.

We are talking about an amendment which was put forth by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath). I hope the hon. member will read the bill. I think what I have to say will answer his question, from my point of view, because there are many other principles involved in the debate. When we reach clause 1 of a bill, as we did with this bill when we dealt with it for a brief time at second reading stage before closure was invoked and the bill went to committee, that is when a member can talk about the principles of a bill. That is when he can talk about the cross currents. I thought we were talking about an amendment to the bill put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East. What he wants to do through his amendment is to recognize the history of this land and recognize what this land has been until Bill C-48 was put before us. The greatest mythology in this debate occurs when we talk about Canada lands.

● (2030)

I listened to the hon. member opposite and he was partly right. I hope he appreciates why we in the east, in Atlantic Canada, feel rather aggrieved and threatened by this bill. It is because until now we have not been part of Canada lands. Look at the bill and the interpretation of Canada lands therein. Clause 2 of the interpretation section of the bill reads:

"Canada lands" means lands that belong to Her Majesty—

That is ownership.

—in right of Canada, or in respect of which Her Majesty in right of Canada has the right to dispose of or exploit the natural resources, situated in

(a) the Yukon Territory or the Northwest Territories,—

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, who owns that now? Canada owns those lands now—the people of Canada. At present there is a contest, a debate, an argument if you will, in which they say they want in effect statehood or provincial status, or autonomy. But I will not get into that subject tonight. Let us not have any more of these red herrings, these oil slicks dragged across this debate about Canada lands.

Most parts of this bill affect ownership, distribution and administration. The federal government now has certain rights. There is an argument on our side as to what the federal government intends to do even with lands it owns, such as the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories. This debate began after Madam Speaker made a ruling this afternoon in which she suspended the debate on motions Nos. 1 and 2 and ruled that we move on to motion No. 3 put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East. His motion would strike out the second part of the meaning of Canada lands. He suggests this be done in a very fundamental way. In effect, he wants it admitted that Canada lands means the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories and not, as stated in the bill: