

Canada Oil and Gas Act

opportunities are being thrust upon us. We feel we have to be ready to meet the challenge and to provide trained, willing and eager Nova Scotians to profit from the job opportunities opening up.

I urge the House again to withdraw this bill at this time because the timing is wrong. If it passes in its present form, what does it do? It places not just a little club but a very big club in the hands of the Right Hon. Prime Minister. It makes a mockery of the proposals put forth by that hon. gentleman to the Premier of Nova Scotia on July 21. In that letter, the Prime Minister stated that he shared Premier Buchanan's view about the desirability of beginning to devise co-operative administrative arrangements and a system of revenue-sharing which will prove acceptable to the two levels of government.

Said the Prime Minister in the second paragraph:

This issue cannot remain unresolved much longer. It is therefore the intention of the federal government to see the matter resolved through the legal process while federal-provincial discussions concentrate on the more germane aspects of administrative mechanisms and revenue-sharing.

In the third paragraph, the Prime Minister states:

In this context, I would like to propose that we undertake an intensive round of negotiations this fall with a view to resolving all outstanding matters by February, 1982. If by then we have not reached an agreement, we should await the outcome of the legal process, which would of course mean that any future negotiations would start from a different base.

Mr. Speaker, that is the big club we would be giving the right hon. gentleman if we passed this bill now. If we used the right hon. gentleman's own reasoning, there should be no further debate on this bill, in fairness to Premier Buchanan and in fairness to Premier Peckford of Newfoundland, until February of 1982. This could mean that, pending the outcome of the negotiations and the legal process, the discussions could then start from an entirely new base. Those were the Prime Minister's own words.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the stakes are very high for Atlantic Canada. They are too high for us and for the federal government to rush in at this moment to try to settle this matter in a hurry.

I am pleased to see the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. De Bané) in the House since I wish to quote briefly from his own document. The hon. gentleman, in Volume No. 1 of his magazine *Evolution*, states, on page 11, that the onshore impact of offshore activity could produce 20,000 to 30,000 direct jobs, some 150,000 indirect jobs, and investment could reach \$8 billion. The article goes on to list the fields in which this activity would take place, such as temporary and permanent service bases, repair, maintenance and steel platform fabrication yards, pipeline installation and pipeline coating yards, partial processing facilities, gas processing and treatment plants and marine terminals. I am only listing a few of the possible golden opportunities that await those of us who live in Atlantic Canada. All these are quoted in the booklet put out by the hon. Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

It is for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, that Nova Scotians and citizens of Atlantic Canada are going to fight. We are going to

fight hard for our rightful place when administrative arrangements and revenue-sharing decisions are made by government authorities. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that this government did not give more time to resolving the difficulties we face owing to the breakdown of the Law of the Sea Conference instead of concentrating its efforts on Bill C-48. When the 150-nation UN conference adjourned this summer in Geneva, the *Times* of London summarized its results as follows:

The old regime has not been cast aside and cannot yet be, although its days are numbered. The new order is almost ready, and is waiting to take its place, but it cannot yet occupy the centre of the stage.

The bombshell was dropped at that conference by United States Ambassador James Malone when he said:

The political and economic interests of the United States need to be better protected in the decision-making system of the proposed international seabed authority.

This causes me to ask, where does the breakdown of this conference leave Canada and Canadians? Most of what we have obtained so far in maritime terms beyond the old three-mile limit has been obtained only by unilateral declaration. They include the economic zone. While the 200-mile fishing zone may be safe, I submit to this House that the 200-mile mining and drilling zone is definitely in jeopardy. We claim—only by unilateral declaration—sovereignty over the Arctic archipelago, the waters in between, and the Arctic islands. We claim—only by unilateral declaration—national jurisdiction over the continental shelf and its resources, principally petroleum. None of these declared assertions of jurisdiction will be recognized internationally if the Law of the Sea convention is not concluded and ratified.

• (1650)

Since we are unable to defend our claims with armed force, there may well be invasions of our proclaimed sovereign areas by those who want to drill for oil within the 200-mile limit or drag for minerals on our continental shelf, unless the convention becomes accepted international law.

What we do have under the 1958 international convention on the continental shelf is jurisdiction on the seabed and in the subsoil out to the limits of exploitability, which today means about 1000 feet. On the east coast, this barely covers Hibernia. In other words, the Law of the Sea convention was an attempt to provide the sanction of international respectability and legality to what we and other states have done unilaterally.

In light of its importance, I cannot help but wonder why the Right Hon. Prime Minister failed to convince President Reagan, for example, that the Law of the Sea was an important item both for Ottawa and the North-South Summit at which, I understand, it was not discussed. By failing in this regard, we stand to lose important economic jurisdiction and potential energy resources, especially in Atlantic Canada.

Since the Law of the Sea will determine whether the potential oil and gas resources off our east coast belong to Canada or to the world and since the conference will take place again in Venezuela only in the fall of 1982, I say, for the final time, that Bill C-48 should be withdrawn until this