

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 82—DESIGNATION OF SOUTH MORESBY AREA AS NATIONAL PARK

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Fulton:

That this House calls upon the Government of British Columbia to co-operate in setting aside the South Moresby area of the Queen Charlotte Islands as a National Park Reserve; and

Further, that the federal government provide for compensation to those interests affected by such a National Park Reserve; and

Further, that the House confirms its intention to ensure the continued participation of the Haida people in matters affecting South Moresby.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, concerning what the House did by unanimous consent in those moments prior to the lunch break, I want to say that I regard it as one of the highest moments in the life of this Parliament and in the life of the House of Commons, it being one of those occasions when we put our hearts and minds together and unanimously express the will of the House of Commons of Canada regarding the preservation of South Moresby and the creation of a national park reserve in that area. I am very glad that we were able to do that and I call the attention of all Canadians concerned about the preservation of that area to the fact that the House of Commons has acted in this way. I think it is a very important moment in the life of the House of Commons.

It is more than appropriate for us to have done this as a Parliament today because of the particular historical context in which we find ourselves, both as it concerns the recent report of the World Commission on Environment and Development chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Madame Brundtland, and also with respect to the historical context in which we have found ourselves for some time now. I would like to say a word about that. Perhaps because we have agreed that the motion shall be deemed to be passed at the end of the day, I will be freer to be less argumentative and more able to put what we have done here today in a larger framework.

● (1550)

I believe that at this point in human history we are faced with a unique set of planetary factors which call for a transcendence of all traditional western political philosophies and ideologies. None of these ideologies, whether they be capitalist or socialist, whether they have been production oriented or profit oriented, which have competed for so long for the minds of men and women are now adequate to the emerging reality of what has popularly become known as planet earth, although in my view obviously some views are more capable of meeting the challenge than others.

I refer to the moment that we are in by quoting from the World Commission on the Environment and Development, the chapter entitled "From One Earth to One World". It reads:

Supply

In the middle of the 20th century, we saw our planet from space for the first time. Historians may eventually find that this vision had a greater impact on thought than did the Copernican revolution of the 16th century, which upset the human self image by revealing that the Earth is not the centre of the universe. From space, we see a small and fragile ball dominated not by human activity and edifice but by a pattern of clouds, oceans, greenery, and soils. Humanity's inability to fit its activities into that pattern is changing planetary systems fundamentally. Many such changes are accompanied by life-threatening hazards. This new reality, from which there is no escape, must be recognized and—managed.

This is true in the physical sense that the prevailing view of economic growth, which is responsible in many ways for much of the clear-cutting that has already been done in all parts of Canada, needs to be transcended in order that the limitless thrust of this way of looking at things not bring us to destruction by its ignorance of the limits to the kind of growth that we have had so far, of the limits to the amount of pollution that the environment can take, for example, of the limits to the amount of resources that are readily available to us without environmental penalty, and finally, quite simply, of the limits upon systems and upon notions of our economy which seem to presuppose, and some even to require, infinite growth in a finite world.

We heard earlier from the Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) about the spirituality, culture and traditions of the Haida people. I want to speak from the traditions of western civilization and talk about the philosophical roots in our own traditions of the problems that we face. It is important to recognize that much of the present dilemma cannot be separated from the limits of that view of nature which has complimented the establishment of what could be called the industrial paradigm, which is what I have been talking about, for the question of resources and of pollution is not just a question of limits of what nature can give and of what nature can take, but also of what nature should be expected to give and what it should not have to take. It is our whole approach to non-human creation which needs to be reflected upon at this point.

The critique of the modern world's attitude to nature has placed much of the blame for the exploitation of nature at the feet of Christianity. It is argued that the notion of man's dominion over nature derived from the creation story in Genesis is responsible for our present situation. This is no doubt partially true in the same way as many other modern attitudes can be traced to the selective expansion of a particular biblical theme at the expense of other themes and at the expense of the biblical stories from which the attitude is derived. The creation story is a good example. If you will permit me to revert to my other vocation I would like to quote from Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 9, which I think is relevant to the South Moresby situation. It reads:

And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.