

and that we do not have a commercial find in the Arctic at the present time.

Let me turn to the east coast. We have seen discoveries there, but we do not have a commercial oil field; there is no such thing. The government tells us that there is good potential for oil off the east coast. I should like to give an illustration of the problem. If the people in the Press Gallery represented the ocean floor and this august body were beneath the ocean floor and an iceberg went through 300 feet above, there would be nothing left of this area because the iceberg would scour 20 to 50 feet below the ocean floor. We do not have the technology to retrieve oil from there, but the government is saying that it can do it. Hopefully some day we will but it will not be by 1990.

● (2010)

In 1947 Canadians controlled our oil industry; by 1970, 90 per cent of it was foreign owned and by 1979, 70 per cent was foreign owned. In effect, the people who came here to discover the oil, because we asked them to, are now being told to go home. Not only are they being told to go home but in many cases they are having to sell out at fire-sale prices. The government is telling them when to sell and what they can sell for. That is an atrocious approach. It was brought about, basically, because a socialist government is running this country, not a Liberal government as it calls itself. We must put that label on the government once and for all; it is a socialist government which is not interested in free enterprise or private industry. The Prime Minister has said that at one time or other in the future every business will have to come to the government for assistance. That would be a terrible situation. I do not think that we as parliamentarians can allow some of our basic rights to be uprooted.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that I have had the opportunity to participate in the debate on this legislation. I have heard many members on this side of the House describe the serious effects that passage of this bill will have on the future development of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories and upon the lives of those who make their permanent homes there. I have heard concern expressed with respect to the rights of our native people in northern Canada, an area which comprises 40 per cent of the country's territory. There are only three members from above the 60th parallel in this House, two of whom sit in this party, and one, the first Inuit to be elected to this chamber, who sits with the NDP.

In the north we have the conviction—and we always try to get the message across when we speak in debates such as this—that we, north of 60, do not matter very much as Canadians. We only occupy three seats in the House. I often wonder what would happen to legislation such as the bill now before us if all the members from the province of Quebec came from the northern areas of Canada. I do not think this bill would stand much of a chance of surviving if that were the

case. Indeed, to coin a northern phrase, I do not think the bill would stand a snowball's chance above 60 of surviving.

Before I get too far into my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I should like to put on record a copy of a letter which I received from the chamber of commerce in the Yukon which was addressed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Munro) who is supposed to be the protector of the rights of northern Canadians. The letter is dated October 23, 1981.

Before reading the letter, I might mention that the native organizations of both northern territories, the mining organizations of both northern territories, the business organizations including the chambers of commerce of both northern territories, all appeared before the committee that examined the provisions of this bill and, without a single exception, no northerner had a kind word to say about it.

Because of its concern, on October 23 the chamber of commerce in Yukon wrote one last appeal to its so-called protector, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, which reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Munro:

Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce would like to reiterate its opposition to Bill C-48 in its present form.

The Chamber is concerned that the bill could have very negative effects on the economies of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories and that it may very well hamper the growth of many northern businesses.

Furthermore, Bill C-48 has no provision for local control over development. Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce urges you to amend the legislation to give Yukoners involvement in decisions that affect the territory.

Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce once again requests that the legislation be amended to provide northerners with resource revenues produced in the north.

They can kiss that idea goodbye forever. The letter goes on:

The Chamber of Commerce strongly urges you to amend Bill C-48 before final approval of the legislation is granted.

Yours very truly,

President  
Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce

That kind of submission has been made repeatedly, Mr. Speaker. A copy of the letter also went to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde).

I express these concerns as the member representing the Yukon, an area which covers 207,000 square miles of Canada of which the federal government has deigned to give some 368 square miles for disposition into private hands. So the government has frozen almost 200,000 square miles of land. You cannot buy a lot, you cannot buy an acreage for farming, you cannot buy a square inch of land as a Yukoner. This country was built on the idea of acquiring, owning and developing land by private individuals.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nielsen:** To coin another northern phrase, this bill will forever put that concept in the deep freeze. There are even more dangers of national concern with respect to this legislation, Mr. Speaker. The bill is to be viewed in the context of a segment, and only a segment, of the government's National