

Adjournment Debate

policies change and unless we can prevail upon the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and his officers to change their attitudes, there is a danger that the offshore development will not go forward.

I ask every person in this House on either side, and all those persons in Nova Scotia and elsewhere in Atlantic Canada, to exert pressure on the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to change his policy, to stop delaying and hindering development, and to encourage it and to work with those who want to develop the offshore.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is very proud of the Canada-Nova Scotia agreement of March 2, as it guarantees to the people of Nova Scotia greater revenues, increased employment opportunities, the promotion of economic development and environmental protection. At the time of the signing of this agreement the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) commented that Nova Scotians would be the first to benefit from offshore development. The generous revenue-sharing system established under this accord would give the government of Nova Scotia potential access to revenues equal to, and in fact somewhat above, the national average accruing to provincial governments. With this agreement, exploration and development can move ahead under a unified management regime that is supported by both levels of government, and the resulting increased level of activity will have an important positive effect on the economy regionally, provincially and nationally.

I might mention one very important aspect of the agreement, and that is that it will allow energy reserves to be identified and flow to Nova Scotian consumers within the decade, thereby reducing the province's reliance on imported oil.

With reference to the hon. member's question concerning the refusal of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to approve inter-company agreements and proposals, I would like to point out that under the new Canada Oil and Gas Act all companies are required to renegotiate their federal exploration permits within six months to a year. One reason for delay in these proceedings is that some companies have not yet come to appreciate the Canada benefits requirement of the new legislation as set out in Section 76:

Before authorizing any work or activity under paragraph (1)(b), the Minister shall require the submission of a plan satisfactory to the Minister for the employment of Canadians and for providing Canadian manufacturers, consultants, contractors and service companies with a full and fair opportunity to participate on a competitive basis in the supply of goods and services used in that work or activity.

Some companies have not yet submitted appropriate documentation in this respect, and the federal government must receive such documentation before approval can be given.

In view of the concern expressed on April 6 by the hon. member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) about the importance of job creation in the Atlantic provinces, I am sure he and all hon. members will recognize the necessity of ensuring that all

oil companies meet the requirements of the Canada Oil and Gas Act in the matter of Canadian benefits.

It is worthy of note that the hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) is not only against coal development in Atlantic Canada but, like the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow), he is also against the production of heavy water in Cape Breton. I want the record to show that.

● (2210)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—PLIGHT OF NICARAGUAN REFUGEES IN HONDURAS. (B) REQUEST FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATION

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, here we are in 1982, sitting late at night in the House of Commons of Canada thinking of human rights. Do they really matter? Do human rights really matter at this time when our country faces economic recession, inflation and high interest rates? How does this stand in our priorities? Does anyone really care? I hope someone still cares about these kinds of issues because they have a growing significance. As nations of the world become more nationalistic and more and more isolationist, there are fewer democracies and more repressive regimes on both left and right, and suddenly our freedom is challenged again as earlier generations saw it challenged.

In the generation of this parliament we have seen the genocide of Kampuchea when three million out of seven million people were slaughtered in the name of a better way of life. That seems so far away—30 hours from here by plane. As things occur closer to home they bring a new kind of reality. That is why we find severe human rights abuses closer to Ottawa than is Vancouver. Suddenly we have a new imperative and a new concern as the world shrinks and moves tighter and tighter around us.

Tonight I want to speak about one of those acts of repression that I witnessed personally. I saw an aboriginal group, older than any civilization in North America, fleeing from Nicaragua. I almost find it hard to believe that I am standing here speaking of the abuses I witnessed—and I did witness them—having to bring them to the attention of the House. Who knows of these Kampuchean and Miskito abuses? In a free democracy such as ours, with its humanitarian values and a respect for the sanctity of life, can we leave this in a vacuum? Can we isolate ourselves within "fortress Canada" and be indifferent to the inhumanity that exists beyond our borders?

During the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938 the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, stated how horrible it was that Britain was trying on gas masks and preparing to go to war to defend a people in a far away land of which they knew nothing. He was quickly shown why Britain should have been prepared to fight for Czechoslovakia, for soon their problem was his problem and the problem of the world. Our shrinking world is only one reason for concern about people in the not so far away lands about which we know relatively little.

There is another, more important reason, and that is the basic ethic that this House of Commons stands for—that we are in fact our brother's keeper. When our brother is being