

ENERGY

GEORGES BANK DRILLING MORATORIUM—PREPARATION OF
LEGISLATION FOR NOVA SCOTIA

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: Honourable senators, I have another question which is also very important to Canada. It has to do with the fishing rights off the Georges Bank, one of the richest fishing grounds in the world. I understand that there has been a moratorium on oil drilling to the year 2000 on the Georges Bank to protect our fisheries off the Atlantic coast.

It is my understanding that there is now a bill before the provincial legislature of Nova Scotia that is intended to protect that fishing ground against oil drilling until the year 2000.

Mr. Ken MacInnis, a lawyer for the NORIG—"No Rigs on Georges Bank"—lobby group, says that the proposed legislation being put forward is ridiculous. He calls it a "menacing act" and says it "puts the onus on fishermen to keep an offshore moratorium against drilling on Georges Bank intact beyond the year 2000."

● (1430)

It is not the fishermen who are doing the drilling; it is the oil companies that are doing the drilling. To put a moratorium on the fishermen so that they will not drill until the year 2000 is not good enough. We need to put a moratorium on the oil companies.

I ask this question of the Leader of the Government in the Senate because Mr. MacInnis, the lawyer, accuses the provincial government of allowing Ottawa to draft the legislation and to present it to the Nova Scotia Legislature. Is the Government of Canada preparing legislation for the Province of Nova Scotia? Is it only the fishermen who cannot drill, and will the government allow the oil companies to keep drilling on Georges Bank and ruin the fisheries?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, I cannot resist the opportunity to observe that the Nova Scotia Legislature, the home of representative and responsible government in this country, adjourned for the summer yesterday, having passed the Meech Lake Accord.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Murray: The honourable senator will permit me to express my great pride and satisfaction in that achievement and event of yesterday.

The Nova Scotia legislation, to which the honourable senator refers, was, indeed, presented by the Nova Scotia minister on May 13 with a view to inhibiting offshore exploration on Georges Bank until the year 2000.

The Honourable Senator Bonnell is correct, as is Mr. MacInnis, in stating that the Nova Scotia bill seeks to mirror amendments to the federal legislation to implement the Canada-Nova Scotia Accord, which is Bill C-75.

If I am not mistaken, that legislation is presently before a legislative committee of the other place, and one expects that in the normal course of events it will arrive in this house where

[Senator Murray.]

my honourable friend will have an opportunity to debate it and ask questions in committee about its purport and effect.

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE
AGREEMENT

STATUS OF HEAVY WATER

Hon. Stanley Haidasz: I should like to refer to the question Senator Bonnell asked a few minutes ago regarding water. I should like to ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate whether heavy water is within the ambit of the Canada-U.S. free trade pact.

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Water as a beverage is within the ambit of the Free Trade Agreement. So far as heavy water is concerned, there are several warehouses full of it in Cape Breton. The previous government continued to turn it out, although there was no foreseeable market for it. We have had to close those plants—and this is a matter that will be debated later today—and have established Enterprise Cape Breton with a view to providing alternative employment for Cape Bretoners, an initiative which is having outstanding success, I am happy to report.

CANADA WINTER GAMES, 1991

REQUEST BY PREMIER OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FOR ACOA
FUNDING

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate regarding the Canada Winter Games, 1991, and a request by Premier Joe Ghiz for funding, but before putting my question I wish to thank the Leader of the Government in the Senate for inviting us to meet yesterday with the directors of ACOA, an energetic group of good businessmen from the four Atlantic provinces—

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): And women.

Senator Bonnell: And women. That group can certainly add to the drive of those four great provinces.

However, I was rather disappointed, as I told the minister privately yesterday, that the minister did not grab that opportunity to give equal representation to the four Atlantic provinces. There are five representatives from New Brunswick; five from Nova Scotia; five from Newfoundland; and three from Prince Edward Island, plus the APEC representative, making four in all. It happens that we have the leadership from APEC. That was the congratulatory note.

I read in the local paper of Wednesday, May 11, 1988, that the Honourable Joe Ghiz, who supports the Leader of the Government in the Senate very well and speaks well of him abroad and at home,—

Senator Steuart: So far!

Senator Bonnell: —is looking to the Honourable Lowell Murray for some funds through ACOA to assist in construct-