

Government orders

Members and I agree with the Bloc Québécois members that we have to stand up for Quebec interests in this project. We all agree and that is why we speak today.

Madam Speaker, the significance of what Quebec is getting is not measured only in terms of value of the contracts flowing from the Hibernia project, but also in terms of acquiring new and valuable expertise in the field of design and construction of offshore structures that Quebec will be able to use on the international market over the years.

People in Quebec should be reminded of one thing, Madam Speaker, it is that the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean voted for Hibernia. When he was minister of the Environment he had managed to get 2 million man-hours for Newfoundland. What is even more surprising, Madam Speaker, it is that the hon. member for Roberval and Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, and the hon. member for Berthier—Montcalm and Minister of the Environment, have done better. They got 4 million man-hours. Four million man-hours is quite an achievement! I wish to thank them for that. Some other people should also be thanked, Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Manicouagan—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Rosemont on a point of order.

Mr. Benoît Tremblay (Rosemont): Madam Speaker, I did not rise earlier when the hon. member for Richmond—Wolfe mentioned that some government members had voted, abstained or kept silent when the bill was in the House. I was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Sciences and Technology then, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared to take risks whenever what I believe in is at stake.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I fail to see what Standing Orders could have been infringed upon in the hon. member's words. The hon. member may want to debate it at some other time, but he has no point of order. The hon. member for Abitibi.

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, I would like to mention the contribution and the efforts of the member for Manicouagan, who is right here beside me. He is a new and very good member. I am extremely pleased to do it, because he was a member of the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources.

He worked very hard for Québec and Canada to have that project.

An hon. member: That is true, Guy!

Mr. Saint-Julien: As my colleague for Duvernay, Vincent Della Noce, used to say: "That is one of the biggest projects for Canada and for Quebec". I agree with him.

Madam Speaker, we could talk about many things regarding that project, but we all stand for it before the voters and the people. It is normal for Quebec members to seek assurances that a good chunk of the 2.7 billion dollars Ottawa has contributed to the project will be spent in Quebec. But it is not certain that their approach is, in the long term, in the interest of Quebec.

It is the duty of the federal government to make sure that its contributions be handed out equitably throughout Canada to be used in the most cost-efficient way. It means that Quebec will never have more than its fair share of the federal windfall. Therefore it is important not to try and grab the whole thing but to enhance our chances to get what will do the most for the economic development of Quebec.

• (1700)

Mr. Langlois: And quality!

Mr. Saint-Julien: And quality, of course, Madam Speaker, as my colleague the member for Manicouagan, who is seated at my left, said. What is important is quality made in Quebec.

Madam Speaker, this whole debate about Hibernia and the allocation of work would not be, were Hibernia a purely financial project. If it were, the participating oil companies would then be completely free to go for the lowest bid, whether it came from Quebec, Korea, Singapore or Italy. Politicians would have no say in the matter. However, the financial involvement of the government introduces a political element and there is no indication as to where political involvement must cease and sound project management begin.

As my colleague the member for Manicouagan said, he immediately stood up for Quebec and the Quebecers as well as for Canada. The project is excellent, I agree.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker—

Mr. Duceppe: On a point of order, Madam Speaker.