

Adjournment Debate

who live in that part of Canada. There was some resistance to that bill. I wondered why and I made inquiries. When the answer to the question came forward from the Privy Council Office as to why there should be resistance to a measure which would give the franchise to these Canadians in these two districts of the Northwest Territories, the answer was that they were mainly Eskimos in that part of the country and they would be extremely susceptible to the views of the Anglican church, which dominated those two areas of Canada. Therefore, they said it would be too dangerous to give these people the franchise. That was the answer given to me. Of course, it was an answer which I rejected out of hand, which every fair-minded Canadian would reject. Eventually the measure was passed the same year it was introduced. Hence, we now have sitting in this place the hon. member for Nunatsiak.

Those two illustrations might give hon. members some idea of the sense of isolation that we in the two northern territories have felt for a long time. It is what I often call the "southern mentality" or the "southern Canadian syndrome." So often in this debate, I have heard expressions like "federal-provincial", "across Canada" and "from sea to sea." There has been nothing said that takes the mental vision of Canada beyond the sixtieth parallel which, after all, composes some 40 per cent of our country in land and water mass. That is very difficult to understand for Canadians who have lived in the north. The only place I have heard the expression "from sea to sea" has been on this side. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) said it in his remarks, as did the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), and as did others from our party who have participated in this debate. They have mentioned the three seas of Canada. They have used the phrase "throughout Canada" instead of "across Canada."

At this time of one minute to ten o'clock I want to leave that thought with you, Mr. Speaker, before embarking tomorrow on the substance of my remarks as to how I feel about the fact that we in the north have been left out of these constitutional considerations and how, in all justice, we should fit into these constitutional considerations.

May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

TRANSPORT—FREIGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR RAPESEED PRODUCTS

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, the question I wish to raise tonight was raised in the House on February 20, 1981, and can be found at page 7513 of *Hansard*. It was a question which was directed to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) asking him to give the House an assurance that the interim freight assistance program for rapeseed products, which expires on March 31, would be extended. I was also asking whether consideration would be given for allowing an increase in the amount of the subsidy to allow for inflation and the increase in the movement of rapeseed products.

● (2200)

I was very disappointed by the fact that the Minister of Transport sluffed off my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray). Then I repeated my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who indicated that the matter was under consideration. I find it strange that the Minister of Transport would not attempt to answer this question. He is well aware of the fact that numerous representations have been made to him directly by the rapeseed processing industry.

The name "rapeseed" has recently been changed to canola. Over the course of the next few months and years, I presume the term "rapeseed" will disappear and the term "canola" will take its place. So when we talk about rapeseed or canola, we are talking about one and the same thing.

The interim rate subsidy provided funds to meet the difference between the freight rate applied to the movement of raw rapeseed and that of processed rapeseed. Unprocessed rapeseed moves to export position under the statutory freight rate, which is roughly a half a cent a tonne mile. Prior to 1976, processed rapeseed products moved at the going commercial rate. Of course, this mitigated against the rapeseed crushing industry, which is simply after parity in terms of freight rates. In other words, it wants the freight rate on processed product to equal roughly that on unprocessed products.

Of course, the reason is very clear. The rapeseed crushing industry is perhaps one of the very few significant, indigenous, value-added, agriculturally-based industries in western Canada. Its growth and development has created a new market. It has provided a very valuable source of domestic vegetable oil. It has become a very major and important export market. Above all, it creates economic opportunities within the regions where rapeseed is produced. It creates jobs. It is an area wherein we can broaden the agricultural base by encouraging the further processing of agricultural products.

A minimum compensatory rate was established by order in council in 1976. Of course, there has been some question about the level of that rate. Certainly it is not a rate which only covers the variable fixed costs. It is a freight rate about which the rapeseed industry has some serious reservations. They asked the Minister of Transport to propose an independent