

Government orders

That is why I supported Bill C-44 when it was referred to the Legislative Committee for clause-by-clause study last June. I have to say that I asked, seconded by the hon. member for Ontario, that the Committee hear witnesses before completing its study of the bill. I wanted to take advantage of the presence of witnesses to ensure that Quebec would benefit fully from the economic impact of the Hibernia project. The minister reassured members of the committee telling them that as a result of discussions between private sector partners and the government of Eastern Canada, including of course Quebec, would get maximum benefit of the positive effects of the Hibernia project. On the basis of this assurance and convinced that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was making every effort to reach this goal, I supported Bill C-44 in the legislative committee. Now that the Hibernia project has been announced and that some information have been made public, we can see that we made the right move in committee. Indeed, when the project was recently announced in Montreal, we were able to learn that a very large part of the engineering works will be done in Montreal by Montreal firms, by Montreal engineers. In addition, some building companies from the province of Quebec and Montreal play a leading role in the joint venture that will perform most of the construction work related to the project.

• (1610)

Madam Speaker, Quebec is already benefitting: some companies already play a big role and are major participants in the Hibernia project. Better still, Hibernia-related business opportunities, unique in that they will lay right at our doorstep, will be provided to our cement companies, shipyards and large manufacturing industries established in the Montreal region in all manufacturing areas from metal parts to highly sophisticated electronics and computer equipment.

Shipping and trucking companies based in Montreal are getting ready to meet the additional traffic Hibernia will generate in the movement of goods manufactured in the Montreal and Quebec region—

Mr. Saint-Julien: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langlois: —toward Newfoundland.

An hon. member: What about Sorel?

Mr. Langlois: I include Sorel in the Montreal region.

It is quite true that because of the Hibernia project Newfoundland will experience an unprecedented economic recovery, and that is good. It will, however, have an impact beyond Newfoundland over the whole eastern part of Canada, including Quebec, of course.

Madam Speaker, the members of the New Democratic Party object to the fact that some of the Hibernia crude oil production will be refined outside of Canada, especially in the United States. Our NDP friends should know that Canada can afford to use some of its natural resources as export commodities.

Should we treat oil differently than we do wood, copper, iron or electricity? I say it should not, Madam Speaker. Some of our oil production can be exported, thus contributing to foreign currencies flourishing into Canada and helping us to maintain a sound balance of payments. You should understand that, my friends.

Madam Speaker, Canada has huge oil and gas reserves, both proven and unharnessed. One only has to visit the North of Alberta, as I did recently, to realize the vastness of the oil resources that can be found in the Athabaska oil sands alone. I would invite my colleagues to make such a visit. It is an education.

So, we can rest assured that there is no risk in exporting some of Hibernia oil production. Canada will benefit from it for many years.

[English]

There is another reason why I supported Bill C-44 in the legislative committee in June, and also why I support it in the House today.

The Hibernia project will provide job opportunities to the residents of several localities of the lower north shore, the eastern section of the riding of Manicouagan. The Blanc-Sablon area is linked to the island of Newfoundland by a ferry service. Already there is a continuous movement of people and goods between the island of Newfoundland and the Blanc-Sablon area.

It will be possible for the residents of the villages of Old Fort, St. Paul's River, Middle Bay, Bradore, Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon, and Blanc-Sablon to apply for jobs on the construction sites. I encourage them to do so.

I am sure that Newfoundlanders, maritimers, and Quebecers will team together in Hibernia. They will work together to bring this great project to its conclu-