

*Petroleum Administration Act***PETROLEUM ADMINISTRATION ACT**

PETITION TO REVOKE PROCLAMATION

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Waddell:

That the proclamation laid before the House on Wednesday, November 12, 1980, pursuant to subsection 52(3) of the Petroleum Administration Act, as proclaimed in PC 1980-2917, be revoked.

Mr. Doug Frith (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I wish to add my comments with regard to the present debate before the House. I know it is a well-known fact to members of this chamber that the basic principles outlined in the budget speech in October were the crux of the energy program that was to be instituted in Canada on behalf of the Government of Canada.

● (1730)

In it they outlined three basic objectives of that energy package. First of all, they dealt with security of supply. Second, they dealt with the opportunity for Canadians to participate in the energy industries more than they have in the past. Third, they dealt with the fairness in pricing and sharing of revenues among governments and industries in this country. The third objective is the one I wished to address myself to more particularly in the first part of my speech this evening.

When we talk about fairness I would like, by way of preamble, to state exactly what the situation is as I see it in Canada today. I think that I, along with many members on this side of the House, have expressed some concern about the level of western frustration. I am glad the member from Lisgar (Mr. Murta) expressed it that way since too often I feel that in this particular debate I have heard from the members opposite the word "separatism". That, clearly, is misleading to a number of Canadians who watch this particular program. Some of the better speeches from members opposite have come from those I would term the moderates in this realm. They discussed the feelings of alienation in western Canada in terms of the situation which I believe exists.

I visited western Canada in July as a result of a request by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) to a number of Liberals in this House to undertake a tour of western Canada in order to explain federal energy pricing policies to Albertans, Saskatchewanians and British Columbians. From the open line shows I participated in and from some of the discussions I had with chamber of commerce groups in western Canada, as well as with people involved in municipal politics in western Canada, I learned first hand that I share some of the frustrations they have with central government. I have had discussions with people who live in western Canada about how they feel about the way the central government treats them.

Before dealing with that I would like to give an historical perspective of how the federation of Canada has evolved since the time of confederation in 1887. Most of us who are students of history realize that at the inception of federal government in Canada the "have" provinces were the maritime provinces. Over the ensuing 113 years since confederation we have experienced a continual evolution of both economic power and population demographic changes which have consistently moved from the eastern borders of our country to the west.

In the last several weeks I have read with interest some very good editorials, not only in central Canadian newspapers but in western Canadian ones as well. They spoke about this shift of power occurring within the country. They spoke about how we should view it from the standpoint of the opportunities it means for Canadians rather than from a sense of frustration as we try to come to grips with this problem of evolution in our country. From my perspective, as member of Parliament for Sudbury, I have some understanding of the frustration which is felt by people who live in western Canada with respect to their interpretation and the way in which they relate to central government. In northern Ontario we have had that same feeling of alienation with respect to our central government. It goes without saying that this kind of alienation, is a function of how far away one is from the centre of power. Political science documents have been written relating to this feeling. It occurs whether it is the provincial centre of power or the federal centre of power. I sensed, and I share, the same frustration as I think western Canadians feel about the way in which the economic structures of this country have worked in their view. I think they have some legitimate beefs. It has worked to their detriment in terms of development of secondary industry in western Canada and in terms of creating job sectors for the next generation of western Canadians. We too in northern Ontario have shared those feelings. For example, in northern Ontario freight rates work to the detriment of the development of secondary manufacturing industries. We see that 112 years after confederation we are still very much a hinterland economy largely resource oriented. Resources are shipped continually from northern Ontario to points in southern Ontario or elsewhere in Canada for further processing. I say, yes, share those feelings of frustration with respect to the feelings of western Canadians. They say, "Look, the resources are going to run out; they are finite resources. At some point in time we must have a manufacturing base in place or we must be able to develop the tertiary sector of the economy for the next generation of western Canadians." I can understand that attitude from the viewpoint of western Canadians. I share it with them from the standpoint of living in northern Ontario.

I am disturbed by some of the comments I have seen in newspaper articles in western Canada. I am somewhat concerned about comments made by some of the members on the benches opposite when they interpret that frustration level. I think the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien) said it very well in Saskatchewan several nights ago when he was confronted by some members of the hard core separatist movement there. He