

National Energy Board Act

Northwest Territories and the Yukon, since it deals particularly with the provisions of section 69 of the act. This section deals with the conveyance or transfer of the right to minerals underneath existing pipelines and transmission lines. I raised this matter in the committee but it was not adequately answered there. I recognize it is a new field and I hope the minister will keep it in the back of his mind when he gets around to further amending the act in ensuing months. The amended act, without saying so conveys to the federal authority sole right in respect of the granting of rights to minerals underneath a pipeline, if the federal authority controls the land over which the pipeline passes. I assume that the federal authority takes the same right in law from this measure as would a private or any other interest.

When an application is made for a pipeline to remove natural gas or oil from offshore—I am speaking of the continental shelf off Canada's east coast, but this point is also applicable to the west coast and to the Arctic—the federal government will have the authority to grant such an application covering the minerals and other resources lying underneath the pipeline. To the best of my knowledge, the question of the ownership of the resources of the continental shelf has not been finally resolved. It was before the courts in a specific instance, but I submit it is a policy matter. In many respects it is a constitutional question, but in the broader realm of politics. This is the caveat I would like to place on the record: the province of Nova Scotia does not accept the claim of the federal government that it has absolute jurisdiction and, in the right of all Canadians, holds the resources that are on the continental shelf.

I do not believe that this question can be resolved in the courts. It must be resolved at the negotiating table. Until it is resolved, the acceptance of amendments which grant these powers should not be construed by the federal government as a right to exercise an authority which it does not yet possess respecting resources on the floor of the seas and under the continental shelf.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order to suggest that since we have made very good progress this afternoon, in the usual co-operative spirit that the opposition tenders, it might be a good time to adjourn.

Mr. Francis: I would like to thank hon. members for their co-operation. We have certainly had a very good afternoon. I join in the hon. member's suggestion that we call it six o'clock.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I was about to make the same suggestion. I would just like to point out that the Government House Leader gave us five items of business today. He went away, and we have done six.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to special order made Thursday, June 18, 1970, this House stands adjourned until 11 o'clock a.m. on Monday next.

At 5.17 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to special order.