

*Oil and Gas Production and Conservation*

gas exploration. We can only hope and anticipate that in the months ahead—and certainly without doubt in years to come—further oil and gas development will take place there. I should like to think at some stage that the members of the board will be full time. I should like to think that the board and its staff will be located in the north, in the area of activity, if not in northern Alberta where these industries are located.

It seems to me that in some respects this bill may be a little premature. During the hearing of evidence before the committee, it was suggested the bill might also encompass control of offshore oil and gas. I want to think that this bill is to apply particularly and only—and I am speaking to the minister now—to the Northwest Territories and the Yukon territory. I am confident about what is to happen in the MacKenzie Delta, the Arctic Islands and the Liard Valley in time to come. I should like to think that the provisions of this bill will apply to that area and that the staff we are concerned about here, regardless of the sorts of figures which have been given to the committee, will be located in the centre of activity. If the government proposes to introduce legislation affecting other areas of Canada over which the federal government has jurisdiction that legislation should be brought in separately.

• (8:30 p.m.)

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I think the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has made some compelling arguments. I regret he was not a member of the committee. I have served on committees with him before and we could have used his knowledge, expertise and good sense. His amendment tries to ensure—it is the amendment of his colleague for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. Thomson)—that the public service will predominate on the oil and gas conservation board. Frankly, I do not think this is necessarily desirable. When saying that I cast no reflection on the abilities of members of the public service. I think the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) pointed out earlier today that I was a public servant. I am very proud of that and I am sorry the hon. member is not here to listen to my remarks. I recognize that the public service has its limitations and weaknesses as well as its strengths. If Canada is to grow and develop we must involve in that development segments of our society other than that very small group in the public service of Canada.

For the reasons I have outlined, I cannot support this amendment. We must involve people outside the public service, no matter what our feelings may be about what may have happened in the past.

**Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, may I say at the outset that I found the remarks of the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) informative. I think all hon. members of the house recognize the special interest he has in the subject matter of this bill. As he knows, I had the opportunity a few years ago to see some bits of his constituency. Sometimes I think my constituency is large enough; but we all know that the area he represents here is far larger than any area any other hon. member represents. I learned a great deal about the viewpoint and outlook of the people in the north when I visited the MacKenzie Valley and other parts of the Territory with a northern affairs committee. I also learned something about the hopes and aspirations for future oil and gas developments in that part of Canada.

I am pleased to see that the hon. member recognizes in principle at least the desirability of having a full-time board of competent people. Possibly his remarks to the effect that this is an interim board reflect indirectly some measure of agreement on his part with a point of view put forward by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and other members of this party. Perhaps the conundrum we have been debating in these amendments could have been avoided if the minister, on behalf of the government, could have assured us that it was the intention to appoint knowledgeable people with a background of experience, but without any connection with the industry, to that board as full-time members. I will go this far in agreeing with the hon. member for Northwest Territories; if that situation were to exist I might be inclined to agree with him that it is not necessary to have people who are actually in the public service on the board. We could have public servants of Canada serving on it in the same way we appoint judges or members of judicial bodies to serve as members of certain bodies, free and un beholden to other interests or pressures in the country. That has always been my understanding of our objective in such appointments. I detect some agreement on the part of the hon. member for Northwest Territories. Probably he shares, in some small