

present time? If such development should proceed on the offshore lands of the Atlantic coast under the provisions of Bill C-48 and under federal jurisdiction, will the Atlantic provinces be assigned the same milk-cow status which western Canadians have tolerated for several decades?

I need only refer to two other tables which I have before me to show the reflections of history upon those great Atlantic provinces which were the founders of Canada in so many respects. If we look at the graph showing the density of population by land area for the four Atlantic provinces, we find that in the case of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the population density is some six times the national average, and considerably higher than that of the province of Ontario. Even in the province of Newfoundland, if we deducted the land area of Labrador, we would find that there is a reasonably high population density, approaching the national average. One would hope that the people concentrated in these regions might be able to find to some degree their own destiny using the benefits of their natural resources.

If we look at another table of Canadian Demographics based on the 1971 census, we find that the greatest migration of peoples within Canada is from the four Atlantic provinces to Ontario. More than 10 per cent of the population of each of those provinces in recent years has migrated to Ontario—10 per cent from Newfoundland, 14 per cent from Prince Edward Island, 13 per cent from Nova Scotia and 11 per cent from New Brunswick.

Why are we encouraging the furtherance of a regime managed from Ottawa which will keep Atlantic Canada forever on the dole and will encourage people to move to Ontario and to other areas away from the vast potential residing in that region?

In conclusion, I submit that we should all support the amendment of the hon. member for St. John's East to assure the future wellbeing of the Maritime areas of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. John Evans (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, after having listened to this debate over the last few days, I should like to speak tonight in an attempt to come to grips with the issues raised by hon. members opposite and with some concern that there are definite problems with the amendment in a number of areas. First, the amendment is drafted improperly. Second, the amendment as drafted has grave consequences for the control and jurisdiction of any government in Canada over the offshore.

I should like to refer to these matters and also to indicate to hon. members that the way the bill is drafted now is, in fact, proper and the only way it could be drafted to ensure that the word "Canadian" is used in the broadest sense and indeed to ensure provincial participation in the resources which lie offshore.

Let me start by reading precisely what is to be amended by the motion of the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr.

Canada Oil and Gas Act

McGrath). Bill C-48 gives the definition of "Canada lands" and refers to the right of the federal government to exploit resources located on the Canada lands, meaning those situated in the Yukon Territory, in the Northwest Territories, on Sable Island, or those submarine areas, not within a province, adjacent to the coast of Canada.

● (2010)

The key to this clause with regard to part (b) is those submarine areas not within a province. I hope hon. members opposite will keep that in mind as I go through my speech, since it is a very important point. The bill says that the definition of Canada lands applies to those submarine areas which are not within a province. I will go on to show why that is extremely important. The bill says:

—adjacent to the coast of Canada and extending throughout the natural prolongation of the land territory of Canada to the outer edge of the continental margin or to a distance of two hundred nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured—

The amendment which is put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East indicates that we are to strike out lines 17 to 25 at page 1 and lines 1 and 2 at page 2 and substitute the following therefor: "west Territories". If we do that, then we would be striking out line 17 which now says "west territories, Sable Island", and we would simply be substituting "west territories", and the bill would then read "situated in (a) the Yukon territory or the Northwest Territories."

The problem is that there is a subclause (a) in that clause. There cannot be a subclause (a) if there is not a subclause (b). In other words, the hon. member's motion should strike out lines 16 to 25 on page 1 and lines 1 and 2 on the next page. Instead, it strikes out words beginning at line 17. First, there is an improper drafting of the amendment. Second, there is a serious problem with regard to the nature of the amendment and what it attempts to do.

As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources indicated earlier today, the amendment would strike out from the definition of "Canada lands" all offshore lands which are associated with Canada. There is a very distinct definition which has to be made between the offshore which belongs to Canada, over which Canada has title, and the offshore the resources of which Canada has the right under international law to exploit the resources but to which it does not have title. Indeed, no country has title beyond 12 miles. At one point in time the limit was three miles.

The point is that neither Canada nor the provincial governments have title, or can lay claim to title, over lands beyond 12 miles from its coasts, under international law. As a result of the hard efforts and the hard work of the Government of Canada in the negotiations under the law of the sea, we were able to obtain, along with other coastal states, the right to exploit the resources from 12 miles to the extremities of the continental shelf, or 200 miles. But that does not give the Government of Canada or the Canadian people ownership over that territory. It gives us the right to develop and exploit the