

Canada Lands Surveys Act

not an expert in this—you could pull out that map. I know it is not necessary to put all the details of the type of survey in the legislation. The legislation before us simply gives the power to set up such a survey system as the minister directs and as is suitable for the north. The details come in the regulations, but sometimes when those regulations are being developed it helps to know that someone has some ideas about what makes a good survey system. If you think of a non-populated area, a terrain that is not smooth like the prairies, then it is really a question of getting a grid system which will make it easy to do the bookkeeping and indexing so that the people who work in the north know where the corners of those grids are and can measure from there.

We have made a good start in the oil lands but I know the base lines are not in place, and if there is any great quarrel over a few feet of land there could be a disaster up there. The fact remains, however, that we need a survey system based on big territory, and a simple grid system that can be easily indexed so that locations can easily be found.

I now come to the last point on this matter of the survey. I have mentioned the grid system as opposed to the linear type of measurement back from a river. We have talked about the square system that works fairly well in the prairies, except in the bush and the rolling country along the rivers in the northern prairies, but now we are moving into a new area of great immensity—I would say ten times larger than the land mass of Canada. We have to develop a system for this that is easy to locate. In the case of the underwater grid I think it will have to be done with references to base line points where, by triangulation and the use of modern radar equipment, location can be established by tuning into the signal given off by the beacon.

All this is known to the scientists who have developed this system in the years since World War II. We have a tremendous amount of knowledge about it which must be transmitted to the new class of surveyor who will be working in the north. That is why we have to approve this question of the schooling and discipline of those surveyors.

There is a purely political, common sense question that I should like to put to the government. Another bill is before the House on metric conversion which provides for the amendment of 90 different statutes before there can be complete conversion to the metric system at the federal level. Yet this bill before us does not seem to be aware that there is such a thing going on as metric conversion. Presumably we will have to bring this bill back in two years to be changed over to the metric system.

I simply suggest that if there is someone in the government who understands the difficulty of the government House leader in trying to get legislation through, he should tell these brilliant nitwits who draft the legislation to remember that there is another bill before us on metric conversion. In this area we are moving into the unknown—there are no cultures in the off-shore areas being attacked; we are not stirring up the cultural traditions of a peasant people or anything like that, so why not agree to start out with the system that will eventually be imposed all across the country? I suppose this never crossed

the minds of those who prepare legislation, but surely someone at the ministerial level on the legislative committee of cabinet should be able to see further than the political attractions of changing the name from “public lands” to “Canada lands” and from “Dominion land surveyor” to “Canada land surveyor,” which will probably make him a better Canadian! It is stirring up disunity. Surely the legislative committee of cabinet should realize that another minister is trying to put through a metric conversion bill which only covers nine statutes and another bill will be required to cover the other 81 statutes.

Has the cabinet lost its capacity to think? Has the cabinet simply turned everything over to the genial, brilliant nitwits who came up with this? Where are the people in cabinet who think? Surely someone in cabinet must pay some attention to the ordinary, commonplace task of being a Privy Councillor?

There is nothing we can do about this situation today, but the bill will have to be amended before it is passed if the government seriously intends to bring in the metric system. I think it is time a giant firecracker was let off under the cabinet. When the government brought in a bill to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act yesterday the opposition demonstrated that it could support it because in the main it was good legislation. But it does irritate us to have to take time over a housekeeping bill when obviously the minister presenting it does not realize that another minister is trying to get the metric system accepted.

This bill discusses surveys and is a demonstration of the asinine type of thing that goes on in the government. As people say when a government is in office too long, it is time they had a rest. I think this certainly applies now.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, to my mind, Bill C-4 is of very great importance. Indeed, it amends the existing act considerably. First, it proposes the repeal of the designation “Dominion” as applied to the lands of Canada in the act as it now stands. I feel that the substitution of the word “Canada” is quite normal in view of the evolution of our country.

If we go back to 1931, when the Statute of Westminster was passed we note that the word “Canada” is mentioned more often than the word “Dominion”. Therefore, if we really want to assert ourselves as a people, who are proud of our country, we should everywhere, as much as possible, designate it under the name of Canada. For my part, I feel in no way offended by the proposed change. On the contrary: I am quite happy with it because in a few weeks we will be celebrating Canada Day. And so we evolve, we grow progressively. Our laws must absolutely be amended to reflect the change and use the word which should, more and more, find preference in the hearts of Canadians.

With regard to surveying, I must say that I had occasion, when I was a bit younger, to work with surveyors. I did love their work. I thought it was wonderful to accompany those