

International Rivers

the exportation of water, the exportation of electricity, the exportation of gas or oil; that we must conserve all these for the Canadian people. I agree entirely, but while he is saying this the Department of Trade and Commerce is exporting atomic materials which could be used for the production of power. Let us not forget that the radioactive substances which are being exported are extremely expendable. It is quite conceivable that we could exhaust our radioactive materials within a reasonably short time. Yet we are exporting these and nothing is said.

The minister gets up and with a great flourish talks about conserving our water resources. How are we going to hold this water back until somebody gets ready to develop it? It is going down across the border now. We are not exporting any water. As I mentioned a moment ago, we could be exporting a lot of good will by allowing the United States government to take advantage of the storage of water in British Columbia to enable them to make a more advantageous use of the waters of that river for down-river power expansion.

I cannot think of anything which would be a greater gesture of good will toward the people to the south than to do that very thing. Yet the government says that it cannot be done. The only reason that they have given so far is that there is a Social Credit government in British Columbia. That is cockeyed reasoning. The Minister of Trade and Commerce had better revise his thinking as far as his cockeyed expressions are concerned.

We are certainly going to vote against this and fight against this. This indicates the most flagrant disregard for provincial autonomy that has ever been perpetrated within this country.

Mr. Fernand Girard (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words in this debate and to support the Social Credit party in its protest against this attack upon provincial rights. I do this because I consider it to be my duty as a member from Quebec to state that whenever there is an attack on provincial rights in Quebec or in British Columbia every member should fight to protect the plurality of governments which is the basis of our constitution.

Last year when the tax agreement problem was before us we members from Quebec rose to speak not because we were nationalists, not because it was a local question, as suggested by the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke (Mr. McLeod), because it was a matter affecting the rights of the provinces.

I shall not attempt to indicate approval or disapproval of the selling of power to the

Kaiser corporation since that is a decision which must be taken by the British Columbia government. That is their own business. But I do oppose centralization. Centralization is as dangerous in British Columbia as it is in Quebec or any other place in the country.

(Translation):

Mr. Speaker, the point at issue at this moment concerns natural resources in a province whose provincial rights will be infringed upon. Little by little the federal government continue their centralizing activities. They wish to extend their control in this field as they have already done in the field of education by offering university grants while recognizing that this is a provincial responsibility. The same holds true in the fields of transportation, taxation, health, and many others.

That is why I felt it to be my duty to rise and support the Social Credit members who rightfully insist that provincial governments be left free to decide those questions which fall within their jurisdiction.

(Text):

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the house ready for the question?

Mr. E. G. Hansell (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, the longer this debate continues the more obvious it becomes that this is a political measure.

We have heard a great deal from speakers on the government side of the house with respect to their desire to protect the national interest. But it has already been pointed out by previous speakers that the premiers of the provinces of Canada are just as good Canadians and just as patriotic as any member of the government which sits in this house.

Furthermore, I might add that you cannot have any national interest without safeguarding the welfare of the provinces. I would like to know how the action of the British Columbia government with respect to this Kaiser power deal is going to depreciate in any way the interests or the welfare of any other province in Canada. That is a point those on the government side of the house, including the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe), and the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Lesage), have failed to answer despite their declared interest in the nation and their desire to introduce legislation to guard provincial powers in the national interest.

I cannot emphasize any more strongly than speakers who have preceded me that there is another motive in presenting this bill and it is a purely political motive. The arguments