

Government Organization Act, 1970

or make a deal with Germany or Britain, regarding a new method that they are using to produce enriched uranium. I wonder if the government has considered any alternatives of this nature. I realize that there are many problems in the field of energy, but let me suggest that this is a very important matter and Canada may have some energy which we could sell to advantage. If we did so, we might be able to provide jobs for some of those who are unemployed and thus move forward in the technological age.

[Translation]

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Chairman, Part II of Bill C-207 offers us an opportunity to discuss the problem of energy.

We have heard this afternoon some very eloquent and detailed speeches on the problem of natural gas and oil transportation, which affects mostly the western provinces at the present time owing to the new Prudhoe Bay oil discoveries.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have this problem in eastern Canada; however, I feel that we would invite discussion of similar problems. Recent decisions reached by Venezuela and Asian countries that have been supplying us with oil until now are a cause for grave concern to us and we would prefer to see the province of Quebec get its gas and oil supplies from Canadian oil sources.

Mr. Chairman, why we be always dependent on some other countries, such as those of Asia or South America, since we have in Canada oil deposits and reserves as substantial as theirs? Moreover, we are told a considerable part of our territory has not even been explored yet. Therefore, the government should decide to make the studies that are required, if it has not already done so, and it should get in touch with private enterprise in order to find a way of supplying the eastern part of Canada with oil and natural gas. I think this would benefit the whole of Canada.

Having said this, Mr. Chairman, I would ask the minister to answer a few questions when he takes the floor in a few minutes. I should like him to explain this addition to the act.

For instance, the act passed in 1966 did not deal with hydro-electric power whereas the present one covers energy generated from water under the item "energy". As far as I know, Mr. Speaker, the production and sale of hydro-electric power falls within provincial jurisdiction.

I know, where the province of Quebec is concerned, that there have been considerable developments in the last few years. Even greater developments are now under way in the James Bay basin. This development interests me more particularly, because the basin is located in my riding.

It is expected that this development will take place in the next few years and involve investments of over \$2 billion. We already know that Quebec's premier, the hon. Robert Bourassa, has made two trips to the United States to seek funds for the development of hydro-electric power in that part of the province of Quebec. We do not know as of yet whether his representations have been successful and will permit this kind of development.

[Mr. Thomson.]

It goes without saying, for the moment at least, that we do not expect to use all the power which will be generated in this basin. Outlets will therefore have to be found and I think this was another purpose of the premier's visit to the United States. However I fail to understand how in order to develop a portion of our land, we must kowtow before foreign financiers and ask them for permission to do so.

Recently we heard the Quebec budget speech. It was stated that there would be no tax boost, in order to allow the development of the economy, to allow people to enjoy a little more of their income.

On the other hand, this same government tells us that it will have to borrow many millions of dollars to make up the deficit. So, they do not raise taxes, in order to leave a little more money in the hands of the citizens to allow a better development of the economy, but they will try to get the savings which may exist to finance the administration of the province of Quebec. If individuals are left with a little more money, they will try to take it away from them through loans to administer the province of Quebec. So, how much will be left for developing private industry, for developing the natural resources of our province of Quebec?

This whole system of borrowing should be improved and our governments at the federal, provincial and municipal levels as well as all government agencies should not have to turn to private investors to borrow the money required for the administration of public affairs. If the government of Quebec, for instance, which is trying to borrow two billion dollars to develop part of its territory, had access to the Bank of Canada, it could borrow this amount and implement this project which could last for some ten years. Then the government of Quebec would not need to offer or sell a part of the Quebec territory to the Americans.

By borrowing from the Bank of Canada, the government would no longer have to run after foreign capital. Furthermore, these Canadian funds would be available for developing private enterprise, for creating new industries and new businesses.

Would the minister clearly indicate what this addition to the present law is all about? I understand its effect would be to insert in clause 8 of the bill all that concerns electrical energy.

Would the minister tell us also what he intends to do with respect to paragraph (d) concerning explosives?

We are all aware that recently we have had problems in connection with the use of explosives and more especially dynamite. We have too often seen dumps of explosives intended for building highways or digging being diverted to persons who were not too anxious about the proper operation of the administration.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to ask the minister to see to it that stored explosives will be better watched so that burglars could not get hold of those explosives and divert them from their purpose.

I think that the few questions which I wanted to ask the minister will considerably clarify the bill under con-