

tion and development in the frontier areas. As I have said, companies can proceed with assurance as a result. In short, we shall have a regime which will stimulate further development in the Canada lands and help to ensure that all Canadians can enjoy the benefits of oil self-sufficiency, as they do in all other areas of energy.

The second major theme which we have seen develop in the debate today is that of ownership of offshore resources. I assume that members opposite have in mind the idea that somehow this bill prevents any further discussion or consideration of how the revenue from what we all hope will be the successful exploration in the Canada lands will be shared. Obviously, the bill does not do that. Indeed, I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that the bill states quite clearly that Canada lands means lands that belong to Her Majesty in the right of Canada. If they are not lands that belong to Her Majesty in the right of Canada, then they are not affected by this bill. Also, in the second part of clause 2 we refer to submarine areas not within a province. If there is some debate, some dissension about what are Canada lands and what are not Canada lands, whether they are within a province or not, then that can be challenged in the courts. Indeed, this afternoon the minister made some reference to the fact that a case currently being heard in the federal court—as I recall, a case initiated by the Seafarers' International Union—may well address this very question of the ownership of offshore resources and the right to exploit those resources. But that, to my mind, is taking an unnecessarily legalistic view of the question.

The fact is that this government has, on numerous occasions, indeed, as was noted by the hon. member for St. John's East, offered to engage in serious discussion with the Maritime provinces of our country to determine a way in which those offshore resources will be explored and developed. The government has indicated its willingness to commit itself to a regime which would provide the adjacent provinces with revenues which would bring them the opportunities which all of us seek for our citizens, providing the adjacent provinces the opportunity to benefit fully from the exploration and development. There is no question here of a grab. Indeed, the land in question is clearly under the authority of the national government of Canada. I include Sable Island. Quite obviously, as is set forth in article 91.9 of the British America Act, the federal Parliament has legislated jurisdiction over Sable Island. Thus, I cannot think why the hon. member for St. John's East sees any particular advantage in deleting that reference when it is a reference enshrined in our Constitution.

● (2200)

With regard to other points made by the hon. member for St. John's East, I would submit that the deletion of the clause would in no way strengthen the legal, or even the political, case made by the adjacent coastal provinces. In fact, in my view and in the view of the government, such a deletion would merely weaken Canada's claim to sovereignty over those waters to the 200-mile limit. If this motion were adopted what

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we would have would be a deletion of all reference to the 200-mile limit. By extension, we would weaken our claim to sovereignty over that area. I noted earlier that the definition provided in the bill excludes submarine areas not within a province. Therefore, that responsibility for all or part of those waters may be devolved to adjacent provinces without any amendment to Bill C-48. There is no need for amendment if such a devolvement were to be made. Rather than clarify the offshore dispute, in our view, the amendment would only serve to confuse the issue and leave unclear the responsibility for such important matters as environmental protection.

Mr. Speaker, may I call it ten o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

SOCIAL SECURITY—MINISTER'S COMMITMENTS TO IMPROVE PENSIONS FOR WOMEN. (A) REQUEST THAT MINISTER PRESS FOR ACTION BY GOVERNMENT. (B) MINISTER'S ROLE IN ADVOCATING INCOME TAX REFORMS

Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, July 3, as recorded in *Hansard* at page 11167, I put a series of questions to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin). The questions raised three main points, and I shall refer to them; but I hope it was clear that the thrust of all three was the same, namely, that I think it is most unfair to the senior citizens of this country that there is so much delay in dealing with the question of raising pensions.

The first point that I raised had to do with a particular group who are being shortchanged. I refer to women between the ages of 55 and 60, and between the ages of 60 and 65. I put them in those two different groups because the discrimination against them varies a bit. In the case of those between 60 and 65, the discrimination is against single women, women who are alone, as opposed to those who can qualify for the spouse's allowance. In the case of those between 55 and 60, the discrimination is against all of them in that there is no federal pension for people in that age bracket.

Earlier today, when I moved a motion under Standing Order 43 along this subject, one of my friends, to have a bit of fun, suggested to me that I was violating the Constitution because I proposed something that seemed to discriminate in favour of one sex as opposed to the other. Of course, my immediate reply was that there is provision in that same Constitution to ameliorate the plight of disadvantaged groups; and women in those two age brackets, from 55 to 65, are certainly a disad-