

Canada Petroleum Resources Act

there is a place for the free enterprise system, an important place. It recognizes as well that because of its small population and overwhelming landmass there is a need in our country to ensure fairness and justice. It recognizes that there is a need for Government intervention and a good social conscience. If the Hon. Member cannot understand that then he is part of the problem and not part of the solution.

The Hon. Member's second question with respect to whether we want an oil industry in Newfoundland or whether we want to go back to fishing and forestry is just another example of the Hon. Member's mental block. This block does not enable the Hon. Member to be more progressive in his views. He wants to tell Newfoundlanders that they must be either quaint fishermen and hewers of wood or that they can make the dramatic leap into the 1980s and try oil and gas. Newfoundlanders believe that they are sound enough in their appreciation of their heritage and culture to maintain the forestry and the fishery as the backbone of their economy. They can maintain it competitively enough to reach out and to participate fully under the proper conditions in the oil and gas industry. We do not feel a need to make a choice. In Newfoundland we have decided to retain what is unique about our province and to participate fully in all that Confederation has to offer the citizens of our province. If the Hon. Member does not understand that then it will be a long time indeed before we elect a New Democrat in the great Province of Newfoundland.

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): Mr. Speaker, that will be a hard act to follow.

One of the communities to which I feel close is Fort McMurray in Alberta. The reason is that if one takes the Fort McMurray phone book and goes through it one will find the names of my constituents throughout. Out of the 28,000 people in Fort McMurray there are between 5,000 and 6,000 Newfoundlanders. There are Rumboldts from Labrador, Walshes from the Island, Russells and Clarks. If one were to go through the phone book, as I did when I was there, one would find the names of a great many young Newfoundlanders in Fort McMurray. They are there because that is where the jobs were. These are young Newfoundlanders who went to Alberta looking for jobs when there were not enough of them at home and when, in fact, there was no hope that there would be any. That was many years ago.

When I was visiting Fort McMurray a couple of years ago, after the meetings we had during the day I went to a pub where a nice Irish band was playing. I talked to some of my fellow countrymen who were there. Some wanted to stay in Alberta since they were Canadians and not museum pieces or quaint folk from the outback, as my colleague, the Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin), pointed out. These are young mature Canadians whose country this is in the full sense of the word. They wish to stay in Alberta to make their living there. However, there were a great many others who had a strong attachment to our province and who wished to return home. They saw that

Hibernia was coming. They knew that the skills they had developed in the oil patch would be of great value to them and to their province in the development of Hibernia. Many of them wanted to return home.

Those who wanted to return home were the ones to whom my colleague referred a few moments ago when he spoke about the thousands who will now be unemployed in western Canada. Some of those thousands who will be out of work in western Canada will head back to the Atlantic provinces to join the many more unemployed who are already there. These are people who had also hoped that Hibernia and Venture would go ahead, as well as other oil discoveries. These projects are now on hold. The dream that we had is quite rapidly being put off to another day. I agree with my colleague from Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe when he says that we do not want to depend only on oil and gas, but that it is a very important, meaningful and real option. It is an option which is now fading further back into the mists of the future because of the policies which have been put before us by the present Government.

I do not wish to repeat the arguments put forward by my friend from Newfoundland who quite lucidly, clearly and correctly pointed out the effect we are now seeing in terms of developments off the East Coast.

To divert for one moment, am I to understand that there is a 20-minute time limit on speeches?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I recognized the Hon. Member on a question or comment. If he now wishes to enter debate he may do so.

Mr. Rompkey: It was my understanding that I was taking part in debate, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will allow the Hon. Member to continue on debate.

Mr. Rompkey: I asked Your Honour if I could continue my remarks since I saw you gesticulating. I was not quite sure whether we were playing football or whether we were still in the House of Commons.

I would now like to talk about why we thought Hibernia was going ahead. We knew that the National Energy Program encouraged exploration off the east coast and that it encouraged Canadian companies. I remember the deals and contracts we signed with companies to explore off the east coast. Built into those agreements was consideration for Canadian companies, smaller companies, Canadian workers and Canadian goods and materials. All of these items had to be guaranteed by the various companies which were exploring off the east coast. My understanding is that that is no longer the case. That is something for which the National Energy Program provided and that is why there was exploration. Those provisions are no longer in place.

The hundreds and possibly thousands of local people who obtained jobs through those companies now find themselves in