

# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 038

CONTENTS

## Monday, January 28, 2008

Question No. 133--

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regards to the Canada Shipping Act: (a) what are the names and nationalities of all military and coast guard vessels which registered with the Eastern Canada Vessel Traffic Services Zone since January 1, 2000; and (b) what are the names and nationalities of all military and coast guard vessels which registered with the Western Canada Vessel Traffic Service Zone since January 1, 2000?

(Return tabled)

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 040

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## Wednesday, January 30, 2008

**Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999**

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's speech outlined some of the conditions within which the government wishes to promote biofuels. Biofuels are a very large component these days in many countries as they attempt to change their energy forums.

I had the opportunity to visit Brazil. I talked to many people there about the efforts they are making on biofuels. I saw the service stations where not only mixed gasoline-ethanol can be bought, but pure ethanol can be bought as well. It is a very large industry there with its own particular issues.

I noted the comment of the member. He said that we are playing catch-up in this world right now with the biofuels industry, and there is no doubt about that.

The question I have is, will we make the same mistakes that other countries have made with the biofuels? Will we make the same mistakes in this country, or will we learn from what the world has experienced with the development of the biofuels industry in order to ensure that our biofuels industry, our attempt, works better and gives a very solid future for Canadians?

The hon. member talked about getting a million cars off the road. He also talked about a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the use of the biofuel. I will not argue with him, but the Environment and Sustainable Development Commissioner in a report a year and a half ago talked about a 20% improvement, using ethanol in the mix, that was assigned in terms of the life cycle of that product and the energy used to produce it.

Which is the number the hon. member is using? Does a million cars off the road represent the 20% improvement in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the 40% improvement in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I think we are going to have a very active debate in Parliament on this issue because we are speaking not simply of agricultural policy but we are investing \$1.7 billion in a greenhouse gas reduction program. Clearly that is the driving force behind this as well and the selling part of what we are doing here today.

Could the parliamentary secretary inform us as to analysis that took place? Perhaps he could comment on the opportunities for the use of biomass in heating and in many other forms and the use of biomass in the production of ethanol. What is the relationship between costs and greenhouse gas reduction and the opportunities that exist in Canada? Was that kind of study a part of the development of this bill?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to some of the comments that the hon. made about cellulosic ethanol and it being the panacea. Do we not really need to have some principles attached to these very large subsidy programs that may allow development of one or the other technology that focuses the subsidy in a direction that would lead people in the future to produce cellulosic ethanol or grain that can be used for protein as well?

There are a variety of better options within the biofuel industry that should be promoted. When we have a subsidy that is set out for simply the production of ethanol, we need to have these kinds of differentiations within the programs that we support to make people move in the right directions. Is this what the hon. member across the way is getting at?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for giving us his point of view, especially when he spoke to the larger issues of energy policy, where much of this has to fit into the design of a green energy future for Canada and for Quebec.

One of the largest debates in Quebec right now is about the importation liquefied natural gas to the province. It is my understanding the Bloc has not taken the position of opposing this. Natural gas is used for space heating. Biomass energy and biological fuels can be used as well for the same purpose.

Is there not a higher quality in developing green energy in Canada for the use by Quebecers over the importation of a potentially very expensive form of energy from places like Russia and Qatar?

....

## EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 042

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## Friday, February 1, 2008

### Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999

The House resumed from January 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be following my colleague from British Columbia Southern Interior, our agriculture critic, who has spoken on Bill C-33, which is being directed through the agriculture committee. It is being run under the auspices of an being an agricultural bill, and in reality it is that, because it is a bill that directs \$2 billion of the government's future spending toward the interests of farmers, not particularly toward the interest of the environment or the interests of Canada in how we are dealing with energy.

It is a response to a perceived need to support farmers. In the United States, it was perceived in that fashion. I think cooler heads are prevailing across the world, but biofuels will be a large part of the energy structure across the world.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit Brazil, where I talked with experts in the biofuels industry there. Brazil's biofuels industry is ramping up quickly. It has signed major contracts with Japan. The pressure on the biofuels industry is going to drive up the price of biofuels. There is no question about it. It is going to make a big difference across the world in what happens with this.

Some of the concerns expressed by my colleague about the degradation of farmland, pristine rainforest and jungle in Brazil are apt. That has taken place. Brazilians recognize that, but they have yet to deal with it.

One of the issues the Brazilians talked about was the opportunity to spread the development of biofuel technology into third world countries in marginal agricultural areas to promote the developing world. In some respects, we can see that it would be a very useful endeavour, whereby marginal land would be taken up in the proper fashion, with proper environmental concerns attached to it. But in most cases as we ramp up the price of biological products for energy, this will go to the best land.

If a farmer can produce corn and sell it for ethanol at a higher price than he can get when he produces corn for food, that is where he is going to go. If a farmer or an agricultural operation in Brazil or west Africa produces sugar cane, they are going to take the best land they can to produce the most sugar cane and to produce the biggest amount of ethanol.

Therefore, we are moving ourselves in a direction that really does not have a lot of hope for the world in the long term. In the short term, Canada needs to establish clear guidelines on how to deal with this industry. Problems are going to be created all over the world, but our country can be a leader in dealing with them correctly here.

I am the party's energy critic and tend to speak to these issues in a holistic sense. I try to look at how every energy transfer affects other things. Let us talk about biomass. When we put the expansion of energy into the biomass area, the pulp and paper industry gets quite concerned about it, because of course its product is now being valued more for energy than it is for pulp and paper.

Once again, when we look at energy in every form, we have to look at how it impacts everything else. It is not simply about establishing a special interest in the country. It is not simply about establishing a need in one sector and saying that this is the direction we

should go in. We are investing \$2 billion in this endeavour. That is more than we are putting into any other part of our greenhouse gas strategy at this time.

What are we going to do? We are going to require a 5% average renewable content in gasoline by 2010. Other regulations will require a 2% average renewable content in diesel and heating oil by 2012, once we show successfully that we can use this in diesel in Canadian environmental conditions. What does this actually mean?

(1035)

When the minister spoke on this issue the other day, he said this would take the equivalent of one million cars off the road. I looked at those numbers and asked him what the percentage would be. He replied that it would be a 40% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Therefore, if 5% is put into gasoline, we are going to get a 2% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Canadian vehicles produce about 100 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year. Two per cent of that is two million tonnes. The minister said four million tonnes. He is inflating those figures. Literature indicates that a 40% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is about the best we can get. Many people say it would only be 20%. Also, if every one of the 26 million drivers in this country has a car, only 500,000 cars would be reduced by this measure, not one million.

Therefore, we have a bit of rhetoric going on around this subject. I think this should be clarified. I hope that this subject and the issues around it will be discussed fully in committee.

What I really want to talk about here today is the need to put this in terms of a national energy strategy. Where does it fit? How does it work?

Interestingly, Saturday is the national day of action on energy, sponsored by the Council of Canadians. The council is joining with many groups, chief executive officers and people all over the country who are crying out for direction on the overall energy strategy of this country.

Are we getting good leadership from the government on this issue? No, we are not. We are getting the opposite. We are getting the kind of leadership that says "here is a special interest and let us push this one forward" in the absence of a debate that would cover all the issues around energy. This is a failure of leadership on the part of the government. People are crying out to the government to correct this problem.

Why is that? Why have the Liberals and now the Conservatives not provided us with leadership on energy issues or energy security issues? The answer is that over the past number of years both governments have entered into arrangements through NAFTA, through the North American energy working group and through the security and prosperity partnership to link us directly with American energy security and American energy plans.

The Alberta government does not send an ambassador on energy to Washington without a reason. There is no Alberta government ambassador here in Ottawa to lobby us on energy concerns. The Alberta ambassador is down in Washington where the action is. This is a clear indication of where our energy policy is being made. This is a clear indication of where the key decisions around energy are being made right now for Canada.

This energy situation needs to be returned to Parliament, where we can take hold of it ourselves. We need to put Canada first in energy policy and energy security. Within that perspective, we should be looking at all the things that we are doing, whether it is biofuels, whether it is the importation of liquefied natural gas, or whether it is the export of bitumen. Whatever we are doing in energy needs to have a "Canada first" label attached to it.

Without a clear and defined direction, with this ad hoc approach, the Prime Minister is not only supporting the American energy plan but is also helping big American agribusiness and the massive American biotech industry.

However, when it comes to the needs of Canadians, energy is very important, of course. We live in a cold climate. Everybody today understands the need for heating oil or natural gas in their homes. They do not question this today, because these things are fundamental requirements for Canadians. We have a fundamental need for a supply of

energy that is available when we need it. Our energy supply should not be impacted by world crises of the kind that are going to be created as the energy situation in the world becomes even more dire.

(1040)

The U.S. has a policy that new energy supplies will be handled internally. That is not simply about economics. That is about security. The United States has a strategic petroleum reserve, a quite large one. That is used to ensure that American citizens are protected at all times.

The Canadian model is to take convention oil, export it into the United States, and import into eastern Canada an equivalent amount. We have really moved away from any semblance of energy security.

Right now in Quebec we are arguing over liquefied natural gas terminals in Rabaska where we will be replacing natural gas that is flowing now from western Canada into the Montreal area with a foreign source of liquefied natural gas. It is coming in tankers from such stable areas as Russia, Qatar and Iran. How is this energy security in this country? How is this working for people in that regard?

When we say we need energy security, it applies to biofuels, it applies to natural gas, it applies to oil, and it means that we have to come together on those issues in this Parliament. It is not a partisan issue. This is an issue that speaks to every Canadian. It speaks to our industry. It speaks to our consumers. We should wake up and deal with it in that fashion.

Biofuels could be a boon to farmers and could help Canada tremendously if they are done well. However, what exactly are we trying to do with biofuels? We are trying to create ethanol. One of the more simpler ways to use biofuels is simply to use them in space heating right across this country.

When I go to Yellowknife, I see that the new correctional facility, a very large correctional facility, is now run on biomass energy at half the cost of the fuel oil it was replacing. This is a simple and direct way to use biomass energy. There is no conversion required into ethanol. The greenhouse gas reductions that are achieved through this process are far superior to that of ethanol in fuel for cars. Why are we not putting some effort into that area?

As well, what are we doing with the bill that will support the development of biological material on marginal lands, whether it is in northern Ontario, New Brunswick or wherever it is in this country where we have farmland that is not useful and is not competitive with agri-businesses in producing food? Those are the areas where we can enhance the use of biological energy, where we can make a big difference to Canadians right now in a variety of industries and which would make a tremendous amount of sense if it is handled in this program.

Many problems with biofuels have been presented, but the core of these problems is caused by lack of leadership that will look at the larger picture and quantify what we are doing rather than insisting that we put forward programs of this magnitude that simply deal with special interests.

The fact that the bill comes through the agricultural committee speaks to that in spades. This is an environmental energy issue. This is an issue that fits much stronger in the natural resources and the environment committees, but it is not there.

If the Prime Minister and the government wanted to show leadership by first thinking how to meet the energy needs of working Canadians, we would be supporting more small scale initiatives around biofuels. The large scale initiatives will help the large scale industry. We can do much better right across this country with biomass energy in so many ways with proper incentives. Where in this program is that available?

(1045)

We need all areas in this country to be producing correctly for the future following principles that are outlined very carefully. The Dutch buy biomass products from Canada

to run in coal plants in Holland. They are one of the biggest purchasers of wood pellets from Canada. The pellets are shipped to Holland and used in coal plants. It is sold as clean energy to customers.

Holland follows a 100-point program of environmental care for that product. It follows it right from where the product is harvested in the forest through the whole process the product follows to the market to ensure it meets the green standards that it has set.

This is the kind of approach that would be very valuable to a biofuels industry right now. It would bring surety to everyone in the industry and in the country that what we are doing is correct. This bill does not list the regulations. It gives the government the opportunity to put in place regulations. That is the heart of the matter for the success of this bill.

This is a very important piece of legislation. This is a very important industry. It needs the utmost attention. We need to do this right. We do not need to do it wrong by following a model that does not work in this world. We can be smarter than that. Let us make sure that when this bill leaves Parliament, it is the finest product we can deliver for Canadians and their future.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I am very interested in the use of biological product for energy. It is there in this country. Within the forestry industry we still have large amounts of biomass that is being simply wasted.

We have not got to the point where the industry is completely converting all of its waste into viable energy product. I think incentives could help a lot. We need also to look at some of the opportunities that are presenting themselves for the use of bioenergy in the forests of British Columbia with the incredible damage that has been caused there by the pine beetle kill.

As I pointed out in my speech, right now wood pellet energy is replacing fuel oil at about 50% of the cost in northern Canada and that is also trucking the pellets a very long way.

When we look at northern Ontario and New Brunswick, we can see multitudes of opportunities for the conversion of buildings and homes to a cheaper source of energy that is readily available there.

It will impact on the forestry industry as the price of oil rises and we can be sure this is going to happen. The major multinationals are not buying back their shares in a record fashion because they feel that the value of oil is going to go down.

Therefore, we are going to see marked increases in the price of oil. Biomass energy will be productive here. If we compare the competitive advantage for a reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between ethanol and the use of biomass energy in heating and we look at the cost effectiveness of those two products, biomass energy would win hands down right now.

A unidirectional approach with a \$2 billion subsidy program to simply biofuels for ethanol and liquid fuels is not the way to go.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, the situation in the world with biofuels is expanding rapidly. There is a rapidly expanding market for biofuels. Major countries like Japan are making huge investments in cornering the market.

Therefore, we have to be careful about what we do with this subsidy incentive. Will it actually help Canadians? Will it put Canadians' needs first? Or will we end up finding ourselves simply supporting the large scale development of a biofuel industry in the world which may or may not have the environmental characteristics, and may or may not have the socio-economic characteristics that we are looking for in Canada?

We have lived in what ideologically everyone calls a market driven economy for quite a while and it is not working any more. We need to have a directed economy, not a

managed economy, which says that these are the directions that businesses should go in to ensure that our future is maintained.

Until many of my colleagues here can understand that and come to that realization which may be difficult for them, as they have grown up with this particular ideology, I think we will be stuck with it. Perhaps the Canadian population will have to work through attrition to change the ideology in that regard.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, we should follow the model that was established by the Dutch industry in using biomass products. We should establish an environmental life cycle analysis that would allow us to subsidize those products which through their life cycle meet the environmental characteristics that we consider important in this country.

Without that kind of attitude, we will not go where we want to go.

....

## Natural Resources

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, fuel shortages in Kirkland Lake, Cape Breton and Inuvik are creating suffering for middle class and working families. Homes and vehicles are going without fuel. Two respected Canadian energy institutes released a detailed report yesterday predicting even more shortages unless Canada acts now.

The Prime Minister claims Canada is an energy superpower, but the reports say Canada is an energy satellite that puts U.S. interests ahead of our own. When is the Prime Minister going to create an energy security strategy, one that puts Canadians first?

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**Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, Canada is in fact an energy superpower. We look forward to working with the provinces and the industry on these issues. We continue to work with them on issues such as climate change and developing the energy sector in this country. We look forward to success in that area.

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## Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999

### [Government Orders]

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his presentation on this very good issue here today, the renewable fuels issue, but I was very interested in his discussion about Quebec and its plans and directions. I think it is important that the discussion take place on a

larger front than the provincial one. We need federal-provincial agreements to drive the kind of energy planning we need in this country.

Having said that, I note that he did say one thing that I found a bit contradictory in terms of his party's position. He said that his members want to work toward eliminating the use of fossil fuels in Quebec, yet his party has not opposed the development of the liquefied natural gas terminals at Rabaska, near Quebec City. These terminals will bring non-renewable fossil fuels from other countries to Canada largely for the use of industry or residents and commercial buildings and heating. Much of this energy could be replaced by the use of bioenergy from Quebec forests or from farmland in Quebec.

Why does the Bloc support such a development when there are greener alternatives within Quebec?

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

### **EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 043**

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## **Monday, February 4, 2008**

### **Youth Criminal Justice Act**

The House resumed from November 26, 2007, consideration of the motion that Bill C-25, An Act to amend the Youth Criminal Justice Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the motion that this question be now put.

....

#### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague across the way from the Bloc that in many cases if we look at individual communities we may find answers to some of the problems that are associated with youth crime.

I want to highlight one briefly. It is the community of Déline in the Northwest Territories which has a population of 800 aboriginal people, a community much like many of our other aboriginal communities across the Northwest Territories. The exception is that it has not had a young offender charge for a period of five years.

Why is that? It is because the community has taken hold very carefully of the young people in the community to provide them with the kind of mentoring in sport, school and activities in the community which brings the young people together. It emphasizes as well bringing back the basic family traits, bringing the elders in with the young people and putting them out in camps on the land.

These things all bring results. This suggests to me that most of the problems inherent in youth crime are focused on the society. Is this not the case? Is this not what the member's observation intended?

....



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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions, totalling some 650 signatures from people in my riding of Western Arctic as well as the other two northern territories, to request that the finance minister raise the northern residents tax deduction which has been set at an amount for the last 20 years, contrary to the increase in inflation which has made the cost of living prohibitive for northerners.

These actions are supported by chambers of commerce and the mining companies that employ people in the region. All people recognize that the cost of living is one of the greatest impediments to northern development.

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....

## Youth Criminal Justice Act

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-25, An Act to amend the Youth Criminal Justice Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the motion that this question be now put.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to address the House on Bill C-25, which attempts to modify the Youth Criminal Justice Act and take into account the number of provisions that deal with the importance of youth in pretrial custody and also how we can sentence young offenders and penalize them more for the crimes they have committed.

I come from a riding in the Northwest Territories in which the crime rate is very high. Social conditions have been bad in the past and continue to provide us with no end of problems in our communities. It is something each community tries to grapple with and understand.

Many of the problems arise from the transient nature of our non-aboriginal society, the cultural impact of changing societies on our aboriginal people, the harsh conditions under which we live and the failure of the education system to give adequate education to many people, not necessarily the fault of the system, but of the whole society. Many things go on in our society that lead young people in the wrong direction.

As a former mayor in a small community that was 50% aboriginal, I understand many of the issues young people are facing in growing up and making choices. It is not easy. Sometimes it comes from the lack of parental guidance available to them. Sometimes it comes from problems that are physiological in nature. Sometimes it comes from a community that does not have an answer for a young person, does not have a direction to give a young person. We all grapple with these issues and we wonder how we can best serve our young people.

Whenever we look at the legislation like this, our primary purpose is to improve the lot of young people as they move toward adulthood, accept their own decisions and comprehend and understand the nature of their acts.

Basically this is common law experience in Canada for 150 years. We accept that young people do not necessarily have all the tools required for the complex decisions they have to make in their everyday life. Sometimes they make mistakes. Sometimes they are led to mistakes. Sometimes they are ill-prepared by their parents to deal with the kinds of choices they have to make. We are all troubled about how we can deal with these things and how we can put them in context.

We think that perhaps stricter sentences will give us an answer, that somehow this will drive the boat to encourage young people to move in the right direction in their future life, that it gives them a very strong message of denunciation that their acts are

inappropriate and they should be struck heavily for doing them and carrying that with them for a while, while in incarceration or other forms.

I have trouble with that. I find it does not really work all that well in our society. I find the solutions for young people are more tied to the things we do that are not tied to incarceration, or the criminal justice system. We have seen the kinds of results that can bring.

I was very encouraged. I held a public meeting in a small community by the name of Déline. I mentioned it in the House earlier today with a question to another speaker.

(1655)

This aboriginal community has had a great success rate in keeping their children in line to avoid many of those pitfalls that are in our society, unlike many other communities. It has a record of five years with no young offender charges in the community. In talking to RCMP officers who supervise and work with the community, they are very pleased with what is happening. They are very pleased the community has taken hold of these young people in many ways.

I like to talk about positive things many times when I talk about young people. We need to have a positive message for young people. That to me is part of the intrinsic nature of young people. They are optimistic and looking forward. Let us give them that chance. This is what the people in Déline have done. They have a very vigorous program of interaction with their young people in their schools. The whole community of 800 people is linked back to the young people. They put the time and effort in with their young people and they get results from it.

They also have opportunities for young people to get the experience of elders. They consider this very important and I think it is very important as well. In our modern society so often we leave our young people with their peers. We are not providing them with the ongoing direction and counselling that they would get in previous generations or in a previous era when they had the opportunity to work with their parents in the fields or in the everyday tasks of a rural and simpler lifestyle.

Now children are alienated from their parents and their workplaces. They are put into a modern society that does not deliver this. In Déline they encourage those directions. They encourage the young people to participate with the people who can give them direction, who have the direction inherent in their nature. It is a very valid point.

As well, I had an opportunity to talk to a sociologist and psychologist about the nature of youth centres. He said to me that in a way, youth centres were validating what modern society was validating, that they got their direction from their peers. They go to a youth centre and interact with young people. They do not have that communication with the whole of society that gives them a better message, that more complete message about what they do with their lives or with the choices they have to make in life.

We have to be very careful with legislation that drives young people into correctional facilities, into environments where they will run into more of the peer situation. They will run into the criminal peer situation, which will increase their likelihood of repeating criminal acts in the future. Therefore, I do not find this is a very useful thing or objective in law. It may work for one or two, but what we have to look in legislation is the best possible solution for the most young people. I find it to be very limiting to think that young people are going to improve by being sent away to correctional facilities, incarcerated in a fashion that denounces their actions, that is a strict deterrence to them for that act.

I had the occasion the other day, in reviewing a parole application, to look at the record of a person in his forties who was incarcerated. I look back at this record and it is almost like a picture perfect image of what I am talking about today. A young person perhaps made a few bad errors in his early life, not serious errors, not things that any of us would be completely immune from or would make a big difference to society, but after a while they accumulated and he was incarcerated.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, certainly, we have seen positive elements of restorative justice in our communities. The issue of the great distances between communities and the cultural alienation that individuals would have when they are incarcerated in some place that has nothing to do with their society at all, that has nothing that they can relate to as a young person, would be a serious problem. We have many people who would have that happen to them on their first trip out of their own community. That would be a very serious part of the problems that we would have with this type of activity.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, whether it is aboriginal or non-aboriginal children, they respond to people taking an interest in their future development. Whether it is in art or music, we have had tremendous success in my community dealing with young people and encouraging them to participate. Music has given them some kind of basis to socialize and to interact. They do not have to be the world's best, but it gives them the opportunity for another way of communicating and that opens up the doors. The member is quite right. Whatever we do for young people, we have to remember that those are lessons they learn.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, we have heard many discussions about this bill. When we come to the decision about why we support that particular amendment, it fits into the global view for the direction our society should take. If the amendment tends to move us away from that global view, then we probably do not support it. That is the principle that most of us follow.

....

## **Controlled Drugs and Substances Act**

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague, the parliamentary secretary, made the statement, and I agree with it, that we should move away from programs that do not work.

Since about 1979, we have been engaged in a war on drugs that has caused uncounted casualties all over the world. It has led to dramatic problems in developing countries and to the incarceration facilities in our neighbour to the south being absolutely loaded with individuals.

Right now in Canada the illegal drug trade is estimated to be about \$10 billion. Of that, \$8 billion is cannabis. Canadians obviously partake in this substance on a regular basis. We can increase the degree of intensity that we put toward those who produce it, but we will not change the market. The bill goes in the wrong direction.

How does my hon. colleague anticipate that the bill will deal with this very large industry, which will be present, in one form or another, after the bill is finished?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, the major impact of the bill is being masked by his discussion about methamphetamines. The question was directed toward the largest part of the illegal drug trade, and he quite rightly pointed to that at the beginning of his discussion. This is the part that I think will cause the greatest degree of difficulty with the bill, so let us not call it anything but a spade.

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

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**Tuesday, February 5, 2008**

### **Immigration and Refugee Protection Act**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (certificate and special advocate) and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the third time and passed.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I take a little exception to the comments made by the member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park about the NDP's concern with the criminals.

The purpose of our stand here is to ensure that we have a process where the citizen can be either proven guilty or innocent within the bounds of our justice system and then be declared a criminal or, as in the case we have seen already over the past two years with the Maher Arar situation, be found innocent. We have to be very careful with this.

Our justice system is what our fathers fought in wars for and what we stand up for as well. We stand up for the rights of our citizens. Our citizens have rights until they are proven guilty.

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

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**Thursday, February 7, 2008**

### **Energy Security Initiative**

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government's misguided policy of selling out Canada's energy security through the North American energy security initiative, boldly promoted on the Prime Minister's own website, is being viewed as a total failure by all sectors of Canadian society.

Business leaders, academics, labour leaders, respected energy experts, provincial governments and municipalities, the consensus is overwhelming that the Conservative government is on the wrong track. They all agree that we must develop a Canada first energy security strategy.

Working Canadians cannot wait until all of our oil and natural gas is completely committed to the United States. We need to move now. We need leadership on how best to invest over the next 25 years in energy systems that will create a green and energy secure Canada.

We need leadership to get Canadians to reduce their energy consumption. We need leadership to increase the use of renewable energy.

That is a tall order, one the Conservative government is not up to. The Conservatives would rather hide behind the false image of our energy superpower status.

Working Canadians want a--

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**The Speaker:**

The hon. member for Egmont.

\* \* \*

....

## Prebudget Consultations

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** --splitting your title.

....

## Prebudget Consultations

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, with respect to my colleague's comments, we are very concerned around the change in the corporate tax rates in this country. The change in the rates will affect primarily businesses and corporations that have profits. One of the clear winners is the banks. The banks and the financial institutions have about 35% of pre-tax profit in this country. If we calculate those figures, what this means to the banks is about \$4 billion a year by 2012 in the banks' pockets.

How does this fit with building our economy? How does this make our economy work better?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, one issue that was raised by the Conservatives in the development of their budget and their mini budget was the concept of fairness as it applies to taxation. I think that is one thing that I did not hear in my colleague's comments.

When we adjust the tax system to favour one group or the other, surely he would see that not all tax cuts are necessarily fair to the other parties in society. I know my experience in municipal government dealing with the ratio of taxation for commercial businesses and for residences suggested that we have to look at fairness in the system very carefully.

Now we have made some very large tax cuts that are going to serve the needs of the larger financial institutions in the country to the greatest extent. How does that compare to what we have done--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to show my appreciation as well for my colleague who brought out many good issues in her speech.

I was interested in her comments about the oil companies. Imperial Oil posted a record profit last year of \$3.5 billion. If we actually examine the nature of the corporate tax cuts that have taken place only this year, we find that they give Imperial Oil an extra \$100 million in its pocket. That is what the Conservative government has put into the pocket of Imperial Oil this year, an extra \$100 million. In 2012 if the record profits continue, that would amount to about \$300 million.

When we examine those types of monies that are made from Canadian resources that represent a deficit in the resource base of the country being exploited by companies to make a profit, how does this match up with the effort made for the single mother with a child in this country?

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 048

CONTENTS

**Monday, February 11, 2008**

**Natural Resources**

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, Gazprom in Russia just cancelled a major liquefied—

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, Gazprom in Russia just cancelled a major liquefied natural gas supply that was to service Quebec's needs. This action points out the short-sighted and foolhardy nature of the government's energy policies.

According to the National Energy Board energy outlook of November 2007, our natural gas supply in Canada is moving to a crisis and people soon are going to be without secure sources of heat for their homes.

Why does the Prime Minister turn his back on a Canada first energy security strategy and continue to leave our future in doubt?

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 052

CONTENTS

Friday, February 15, 2008

## Aboriginal Affairs

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech, the Conservative government said that it would protect Arctic sovereignty through several means, including “improving and devolving governance, so that northerners have greater control over their destinies”.

The Premier of the Northwest Territories was hopeful last month that the Prime Minister would want to discuss devolution of governance when they met. Returning from that meeting, he said that devolution was now on the back burner.

Northerners know the Conservative government's promises are hollow. When will the Prime Minister show leadership and do the things he promised?

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**Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, we have made that commitment to devolve government in the Northwest Territories. In fact, we are prepared to return to the table as soon as the territorial government indicates its interest in doing so.

We have made this commitment, and I believe it will be mutually beneficial for the people of the Northwest Territories and Canada.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I hope this proceeds in due course in the next while.

Examples of how the Conservative government has failed the people of the north are its much ballyhooed improvements to the funding formula for the territories and its lack of any attempt to negotiate a resource revenue sharing agreement with the public and aboriginal governments of the Northwest Territories.

The result is the GNWT is now facing budget cuts of up to 13%, with attendant losses of essential services and jobs. This is hurting the north.

When will the government start working on a fair deal for the people of the north?

(1145)

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**Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question, as it gives me an opportunity to highlight the incredible efforts that we have made in the north. In fact, the Prime Minister has led our

government in a way that we have put a focus on the north, which has not been seen since the Diefenbaker era.

Our government is extending a massive amount of interest to protect the sovereignty of our north. Through our equalization improvements, northern territories are receiving a financial incentive to continue with their negotiations in Canada. I am very proud of the efforts we have made.

\* \* \*

....

## **Committees of the House**

### Official Languages

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to follow the line of questioning that came up earlier in regard to the question of whether we have moved along with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms represents one of the most important aspects of Canadian culture. It is a defining fact of our society. We have had it in place for a fair number of years. The complexity of the decisions around the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is getting more difficult. The need for court rulings on many aspects of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is probably in some ways moving from more simplistic forms of challenges to more complex forms.

Would this not suggest that we need to put dollars toward this type of activity and that we need to support Canadian citizens in their search for rights and freedoms just as we support citizens in other countries in the world in their search for rights and freedoms?

....

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# **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 054**

**CONTENTS**

**Tuesday, February 26, 2008**

**Afghanistan**

The House resumed from February 25 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

....



**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague's speech, which carried the government's message. He talked about the difficulty in the decision making on Afghanistan and I appreciate his point of view. Coming from a party that has had a consistent position on the Afghanistan issue over the two years that I have been in Parliament, I too feel the incredible strain that comes with making decisions like this.

I would say for my hon. colleague that we have witnessed in some cases the demonization of people in our caucus who are standing up and speaking for about 50% of Canadians, who wish to see the mission end. Does my hon. colleague not agree that if he wants to bring some civility and clarity to this issue he must respect and his party must acknowledge the consistency and the importance of what our party says as well?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thought my hon. colleague's presentation was quite rational. He did speak about the Manley report and the fact that it did not seem to go where he wanted it to go. Quite clearly, that is the case for many of us.

Evidence has been presented that the Manley report was a compilation of ideas that Manley himself expressed before the panel was set up. At the same time, we know the writing of the document was carried out by the defence team wrote, which has given us most of the public direction on the government's policy in Afghanistan to start with.

The process of coming to an understanding of Afghanistan through the Manley report is very flawed. Would he not agree?

....

## Afghanistan

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my colleague touched on a number of points. He talked about the need to raise the level of debate.

Yesterday I was troubled by the comments from the deputy leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore. He suggested that for some reason the New Democratic Party was not fit to govern. He said that it had a consistent position on Afghanistan over the last two years, calling for the removal of our troops from a combat role in Afghanistan, fully supported by a convention at which 90% of the delegates voted for the motion.

In a democracy the New Democratic Party has followed a pattern of achieving support from its constituency, representing the opinion of about 50% of Canadians on this mission. We have portrayed a consistent opinion over the past two years in the face of relentless name calling and diatribes from government members and from the opposition members to some degree.

How does the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore have the nerve to say that we are not fit to government, when his party has changed its policy three times in the last two years on this very thing? Now for the very crass political purpose of avoiding an election, the Liberals have made a deal with the government. How does he stand with kind of behaviour in the House by his own leader?

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 055

CONTENTS

## Wednesday, February 27, 2008

### The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance

The House resumed from February 26 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, we in the New Democratic Party recognize that the budget follows the mini-budget in November. That is when the real errors of the government took place in making such extreme cuts to the tax regime on which the government operates. Now we are faced with a future of fiscal uncertainty in the country.

Does my hon. colleague not agree with me that there really is no way to fix this other than to move on to an election and replace the government? We could possibly get some changes in the House of Commons and we could restore the required tax regime to run the country in a proper fashion.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, in 2005 the New Democratic Party stopped the last corporate tax cut that was proposed by the Liberals at the time. Since then, corporations have done fairly well in Canada.

In that period, following the failure to cut corporate taxes, did we see a downturn in the economy? Did we see any corporations that were particularly hurting, or did we see many of them having record profits at that time?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I will try to be prompt with my question. The hon. member in his speech talked about the money that is put into carbon capture and storage in the budget, some \$240 million. At the same time, the only new money in the budget for clean energy is about \$5 million over two years under the accelerated capital cost allowance.

There is a need for some analysis of the results of some of these projects. I sit on the natural resources committee, and we did not see any analysis of carbon capture and storage in comparison to other strategies for greenhouse gas reduction in this country.

Could the hon. member tell us how the government has come to the conclusion that this investment of Canadian funds is so much better than many of the other possibilities that we have in the country to more directly reduce greenhouse gas emissions right away? Why should we be pouring money into a very strong oil and gas industry that has the resources to invest its own money in dealing with its own pollution problems?

....

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 056

CONTENTS

## Thursday, February 28, 2008

### The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance

The House resumed from February 27 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, in listening to my hon. colleague's speech, we get more and more the sense that this is a budget for winners and losers. Lowered tax cuts for corporations help corporations that are winners. That does not help the corporations that are losing right now. It does not provide the kind of investment in things that will bring them to a profitable state.

When we talk about the tax-free savings account, for somebody who has maxed out his credit card, which in Canada right now many people have, there is no opportunity for saving, so what we see once again is measures put in place for those who are the winners in the system.

We really have a responsibility in this Parliament to represent all people, to try to find ways in which we can bring equity to what we are doing in the country, to allow the opportunity for those who are less advantaged, whether they are corporations or individuals, to pull themselves up.

The latest budget, I would point out to my hon. colleague, seems to do none of that. How is the government being responsible to people in society? How is it being responsible when it puts forward a budget that so clearly identifies winners and losers?

....

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 058

CONTENTS

# Monday, March 3, 2008

## The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance

The House resumed from February 28 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and of the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's speech about new investment in Peterborough. My goodness, I thought, this is really quite something, in that the member is admitting that good planning and investment in public infrastructure will drive businesses forward.

Yet at the same time, his government has taken the irresponsible step of reducing the revenues of the federal government so that the kinds of investments that he is talking about for his particular community cannot be spread across the country. In my constituency in the Northwest Territories, we desperately need roads, transmission lines and better airports, all the things that must be made with public investment, but the finance minister has given all the money away. How am I supposed to come up with the dollars for my riding that his Minister of Finance has so graciously given to Peterborough?

....

## The Environment

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative-Liberal wrong-headed budget gives over \$250 million to promote pumping carbon dioxide into the ground, a high cost, uncertain method known as sequestration. Also the fossil fuel industry does not have to clean up its own environmental mess.

The government gives nothing new to help working families deal with sky-high energy bills through energy conservation measures, nothing for remote communities for wind power and no more money for solar energy.

When is the Conservative-Liberal government going to stop shovelling dollars to the big polluters and start helping average Canadians?

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**Hon. Gary Lunn (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, we do not need to take any lessons from the NDP.

Carbon sequestration is one of the leading technologies. We take CO<sub>2</sub>, which would normally go in the atmosphere, and put it in the ground where it came from, not to mention the fact that we have committed more money in renewable energy and on energy efficiency.

We are taking concrete action that will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, unlike previous governments after 13 years of letting them rise by 35%. We are getting the job done on behalf of all Canadians.

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 063

CONTENTS

**Monday, March 10, 2008**

**Afghanistan**

## **[Government Orders]**

The House resumed from February 26 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand in Parliament and talk about our armed forces. All of us truly respect the role that they play. At the same time, we are parliamentarians and we have to come to grips with the nature of the mission and the nature of the direction that we can take.

A Liberal member stood up a while ago and said that the New Democratic Party, in taking a position of withdrawal from Afghanistan, demonstrated its inability to govern our country. It demonstrated our lack of sensitivity to the understanding of these issues.

I would go back to the experience of Spain a few years ago when the Spanish government came to power and withdrew its troops from Iraq. The Spanish government successfully disengaged from that conflict. That government carried on to solve some of its own internal insurgency issues. It has worked very hard to settle the problems it has in its own country.

There are other ways that we can approach the Afghanistan problem on an international basis. It does not take away the ability of a party to govern. That kind of a remark is simply inappropriate here. We are discussing a very difficult and serious situation that Canada has got itself into.

The two larger parties in Parliament have decided that they can settle their differences over a three year extension of this mission. We do not think that is appropriate. We have a solid position.

My question for my hon. colleague across the way is this. How does our party's position make us less informed, less able to conduct the business of the House, as one of his hon. members chose to point out?

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague with a great deal of interest. I find him to be a very logical and amenable person in most of his parliamentary duties.

When we look at what is happening in Afghanistan, the Conservatives and Liberals are forming a coalition on an extension of the conflict for three years with a very definitive end date. That end date is not attached to a success date or a successful point in Afghanistan's development. We see it simply as an end point. We are debating a motion that will extend our involvement in Afghanistan to 2011. Our soldiers will continue to be

engaged in active combat, where their lives are in danger, but there is no understanding of the end point being a success point.

We have moved from the Conservatives having an open-ended approach where we were going to be there until we were successful to the Liberals wanting us to get out a little bit earlier. How does this logically follow that now we have an end date of 2011 and we are asking our soldiers to remain there regardless of the successful outcome of the mission?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that I have the privilege to ask a supplementary question during debate.

Once again I go to the logic of the position that the hon. member is putting forward that we do not have a success date. We are locking in our soldiers to be engaged in Afghanistan for three more years without a measurement of success, without an understanding.

I think our position in all ways is more defensible. We are saying that the mission is not succeeding and that we need to change the mission. In order to change the mission we need to withdraw from the effort that we are engaged in now in southern Afghanistan and put forward a new approach from Canada.

How does it work to keep our soldiers in Afghanistan for three more years without understanding what success there will be?

....

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

### EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 064

#### CONTENTS

## Tuesday, March 11, 2008

### Afghanistan

The House resumed from March 10 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I would like to split my time with the member for Victoria.

As we stand on this particular issue of Afghanistan, and it is not the first time that I have spoken on it, I note that it has been an ongoing difficult issue for this Parliament. It is difficult to debate, because so many times the rhetoric has focused around supporting our troops rather than examining the mission that we are asking those brave troops to carry out for us, far away from their homes in another land.

It is difficult, too, because midway through the time we were in Afghanistan, the reassignment in 2005 had no direction from Parliament. It had no debate in Parliament.

The book written by Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar*, sums up this situation very well. It brings out how important the debate in Parliament is, how important it is to come to grips with an issue like this in a public forum,

with the attendant details of what we are doing in our foreign policy and our military policy.

Our engagement in Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan was ill-conceived, it was not debated, and it was led by a chief of staff seemingly motivated to show his friends in the U.S. military how tough he was. This type of leadership has been very difficult for us. It has also shown up in many other ways.

General Hillier's role in the making of this situation cannot be understated. In many ways, we have allowed the military to run the engagement. He continues to try to usurp the real democratic responsibility of this House and of the members in this House with his comments of February 22, when he suggested in his approach to this debate that somehow the suicide bombings of the previous week might well be the result of this debate in Parliament, somehow making the Taliban ready to tip the balance by engaging in that type of activity. This is patently unbelievable but has cast General Hillier further as one who would interfere at will in the serious debate that must take place on this further deployment.

In reality, the two suicide bombings in that period suggest something quite different. They are tragic and horrible events.

The first targeted the police force in Kandahar and, quite honestly, was most likely coming out of the local situation within that province, one that has been constantly cited as a real problem by most independent witnesses: a corrupt, duplicitous police force. If members have the opportunity, they can read a very good account of this in a book by Sarah Chayes, *The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan After the Taliban*. She describes the process by which the police force in Kandahar was corrupted very badly through the early part of this decade.

The second incident, which took place in Spin Buldak against a Canadian armoured patrol, represents a failure of the Canadian command to heed the advice of their local allies, the Afghan authorities. How can we consider the direction of negotiation and settlement when we are not yet ready to listen to what we consider the legitimate authority in this volatile country?

We have seen that as well with the kinds of things that come out of the assembly in Afghanistan, where they are asking for the cessation of bombing of civilians and calling for more active engagement in diplomacy with the insurgent forces.

The only way that we as Canadians will be able to move toward promoting negotiation, dialogue and ceasefires is to completely change the way we are doing business in Afghanistan, including getting a change in leadership, relieving our brave combat troops of their unfair burden, and appealing to the United Nations to take over the complete responsibility for an ongoing peacemaking effort in this war-torn country, one that has been war torn over many decades.

(1845)

This debate has been made more difficult by ongoing and relentless name-calling and accusations hurled by members in the House in our direction, especially now that we, along with the Bloc, are standing up to this motion.

How have we reached this point where a large majority of the House appears on the verge of extending the mission to 2011 when the same individuals, who were here a scant 20 months ago, made a decision, which was very close, to extend the mission to 2009?

I want to review that direction that has taken place. In August 2007, in Montebello, the Prime Minister served notice to U.S. President George W. Bush that Canadian troops would be pulled out of Afghanistan in February 2009 unless he was able to get a political endorsement to extend their mission. At the same time, we heard Canadians officials saying that we would be in Afghanistan until 2011. This has moved the direction and, thanks to the Liberals, it now looks like the Prime Minister will get his endorsement.

In 2001, the Liberals first sent troops to Afghanistan with the understanding that they would not be there very long. Early in, early out was the cry from the Liberals. However, that cry was forgotten as the Liberals moved inch by inch to having the same position as the Conservatives.

In 2005, the former Liberal government deployed 2,400 troops to a combat mission in the Kandahar province of Afghanistan with no end date for the mission.

On November 22, 2006, the Leader of the Liberal Party told the *Victoria Times Colonist*:

Canada should withdraw its troops "with honour" from Afghanistan before 2009 because their current mission is misguided.

That was the position then. On April 24, 2007, the Leader of the Liberal Party moved a motion stating that he was against the mission but that he did not want it to end until after 2009. Six days later, the Liberals voted in favour of continuing the mission by voting against an NDP motion for the immediate withdrawal of Canadian Forces from combat.

A month later, the Liberal position again moved closer to the Conservatives when the leader of the party told the *Globe and Mail* that he was open to keeping Canadian troops in Afghanistan after February 2009.

We then had the development of the Manley report which brought us to this point. It calls for an extension of two more years in Afghanistan. On February 12, 2008, a Liberal press release stated:

The Liberal Party will support a continuation of the military presence in Kandahar until February 2011....

The same release states that the Liberals are still firmly committed to withdrawing troops by 2011, just as they had been committed to withdrawing them by 2009, just like they had been committed in the beginning to early in, early out.

Day by day, month by month, the Liberals have moved closer to the Conservative position. What is that position? It is really a blank cheque commitment to the United States to keep our young men and women in a combat situation in Afghanistan, unlike many of our NATO allies, in the midst of combat, in the dangerous areas of combat and with a projection of an end by 2011 but no sense that there is a progress point that they can go to.

This wrong-headed approach is focused only on a military solution, a military solution that will do nothing but create more enemies and a position at odds with what Canadians want.

In July 2007, an Angus Reid poll showed that nearly 50% of Canadians supported withdrawal before 2009 and 16% supported an extension. In an Angus Reid poll in August 2007, 49% of Canadians saw the mission as futile. In September 2007, a *Globe and Mail* Labour Day poll showed that 85% of Canadians did not want the mission extended past February 2009. However, here we are today moving in that direction, it appears, by the large majority of members in this House.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question because it is one that we have heard a number of times before and it is one that he referred to as a fact. He said that when we pull the 2,400 troops out of Kandahar province, the fact is that we will be in a situation where women who stand up in Afghanistan will be beheaded. I do not support that kind of logic when we can simply say something and it is a fact.

What we have in Afghanistan right now is a continually deteriorating situation and we need to move to a point where we can bring some measure of solution to Afghanistan. Is it the partition of that country? Is it, as Pakistan has done, to create semi-autonomous areas within its own country to deal with the different types of cultures that it has within its mix? That may well be part of it, but we need to move in that direction.

I do not think continuing with a combat role has shown any sense that it is moving us toward a solution, which is why we, the New Democratic Party, after careful consideration, through much debate and through a convention that ratified our point of view--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, in my discussion I talked about where we are now in terms of where the parties have moved.



I want the general public to understand what has happened here because that kind of knowledge is useful. We have had many speakers speak to the issues in this conflict but I want people to understand the process. I want people to understand the way that the decision making has occurred, which is simply what I have done today.

....

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 066

CONTENTS

**Thursday, March 13, 2008**

### **Afghanistan**

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his dissertation on the reasons why we went to Afghanistan. I will not question his research on that topic because it seems to be fairly inclusive as to the details of why we went into Afghanistan, and that is an important point.

It is not the point we are debating today. The purpose of this discussion is whether we should stay on in Afghanistan. To equate the actions of a shadowy group such as al-Qaeda with its relationship to the tragic events of 2001 with the continued pursuit of a section of the Afghanistan cultural makeup, and the Pashtun and the Taliban are a part of that, is not really germane.

The germane issue is whether we should remain in Afghanistan. Regardless of why Canada went there, we have to assess the need for Canada's action there now.

How does my colleague reconcile the continued pursuit of a UN and a NATO obligation to deal in the past with what—

....

LNG Terminals

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking tonight on the question of LNG terminals.

Right across this country, we are looking at LNG terminals coming up on either coast. These liquefied natural gas tankers were considered by the Prime Minister to be too dangerous to go through the waters off New Brunswick, but when it came to standing up for the people of Quebec about the same terminals going in near the city of Quebec, he was okay with that. We have seen that the Rabaska terminal received federal approval on February 28.

Surely the tragic happenings of the ferry off the coast of British Columbia has alerted us to the dangers that we can have with extended tanker traffic and large ship traffic in our waters.

A report by the U.S. department of energy on LNG tanker safety, considered conservative in its findings, identified that damages to persons or property from a tank explosion would cover an area of 1,600 metres in radius, a circle of over three kilometres across, from an accident. An exploding vapour cloud from an LNG tanker hit by a terrorist attack could cause damages as far away as 2,500 metres. If more than one LNG tank exploded, these amounts would increase by up to 30%.

In 2004 there was a tragic explosion and fire at the LNG facility in Algeria where 27 people were killed and 56 were injured. It was an explosion caused by a leak in a pipe. The blast was felt miles from the site.

In 1979 an explosion at the LNG plant at Cove Point, Maryland, killed one and caused extensive damages.

In 1973 an explosion at an LNG plant in Staten Island, New York, killed 37, and this list goes on.

These facilities are hazardous in their nature. They are not really the kinds of facilities we want to locate in a narrow river which is only 305 metres wide at the Rabaska site. Right in the middle of a very populated area of Quebec City, celebrating its 400th year this year, is a very serious place to put an LNG terminal.

In 2002 the city of Boston denied permission for an LNG tanker to enter that city's port. The Boston fire chief said he did not believe any fire department could put out an initial fire if a ship were struck, due to the rapid burn rate of the gas.

A Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor who studied LNG tanker safety for the American National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration warned that a strike against an LNG tanker could spark a huge inferno that would scorch and kill nearby residents, set waterfront buildings ablaze, and shoot searing electromagnetic waves into neighbourhoods that could spark even more fires.

We are talking about a product whereby once the terminal is established, we are going to see an ongoing procession of these ships up the St. Lawrence Seaway in the midst of 40 million tonnes of cargo that are moved there on some 3,000 ships, constantly, for decades and decades to come.

When we look at the location and the set-up for these, and I am not talking about the relative merit of LNG but the location and set-up of these types of facilities, if we are just simply taking the--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, those certainly are not reassuring words to me. The first words of the hon. member's presentation were the tremendous benefit that this was to the economy. That is not the issue here.

The issue here is safety. The issue is the fact that we are putting a terminal in a very difficult location on a well-travelled and used seaway that will most likely expand its use in the future. We are adding to the use. We are adding to the danger that is inherent in any busy traffic area.

This terminal could have been put in other locations. This terminal did not have to go where it is.

I do not want to talk about the benefits of LNG. I do not think there are any. I think it is a negative loss to Canada's economy.

If the Conservative government would have taken heed of the Canada first energy policy, we would not be in this fix.

....

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 067

## CONTENTS

**Friday, March 14, 2008**

### **Judges Act**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-31, An Act to amend the Judges Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, judges are important to us in the Northwest Territories because we have a high rate of criminal charges. We appreciate the work they do.

However, the government is engaged in a cost reduction program. The plan of the Conservative government would salary judges, but how would it ensure that we have the kind of resources required to take on extra judges, given that we have to sometimes fly them and their court staff to locations thousands of miles away from their courthouse?

....

### **Arctic Winter Games**

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, this week more than 2,200 athletes, coaches and officials from the northern regions of Canada, Russia, Greenland, Norway, Finland and the United States have gathered in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, for the 20th Arctic Winter Games.

This is a very special event for the people of my riding. Yellowknife hosted the very first Arctic Winter Games back in 1970.

The games focus on traditional sports such as soccer, hockey, skiing and gymnastics, along with unique Arctic sports, but also place emphasis on the diversity of northern cultures. The general theme of the games is a celebration of sport and culture.

Tomorrow I will be presenting bronze, silver and gold Ulu medals to athletes, and celebrating another successful games with thousands of participants at the official closing ceremonies.

I would like to extend my congratulations and sincere thanks to all who have helped make the 20th Arctic Winter Games the best ever, especially the dedicated volunteers who have worked so hard to make it all happen. I extend my thanks to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

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**39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

## EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 068

### CONTENTS

# Monday, March 31, 2008

#### Opposition Motion—The Economy

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his elucidation of the issues of regulatory process in this country. It was something that I had heard before but it was well done.

I would like to get back to the finance minister's comments in the last while about corporate taxation. In my territory, we went through a process once of cutting corporate taxes or raising corporate taxes but we found that this would attract corporations to file in the particular province or territory with the lowest tax rate. We saw that a competition developed among the provinces, a spiraling downward of the corporate tax rate, as they each bid to keep their corporations filing in their own region.

Does my colleague think it is appropriate for Ontario to continue this practice? If we see Ontario cutting the corporate taxes, what will that do to all the other provinces and territories that will need to follow suit?

....

#### Opposition Motion--The Economy

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the previous question from the member from the Liberal party took me aback, because of course the Liberals did support the budget, but when I look at the evidence I see that in October the Liberal leader actually was pushing for a very low corporate tax rate. I think the Conservatives responded in kind. The two parties can coexist on that basis quite well.

However, the hon. member brought up one point in his speech, which is that I think it might be more germane for the federal government to look at energy costs. Those are really important right now in Ontario and have a significant impact on the future of investment in Ontario.

When the government will not examine the nature of our natural gas supply in this country and when it will not examine the nature of the oil supply not only in this country but worldwide, how can we offer assurances to Canadian businesses and to investors that could be investing in Ontario that there will be a reasonable supply of energy for the future, that the energy will be available, and that we have a national energy strategy for Canadians first that will deliver this over the next decade?

....

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### CONTENTS

# Wednesday, April 2, 2008

## Opposition Motion—Corporate Tax Cuts

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed my hon. colleague's speech. He talked about the 2005 arrangement that was struck between the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party in order to access some \$5 billion of extra spending for well needed programs, including housing programs that the Conservatives claimed as their own in the last two year period.

Interestingly enough, over that time when we did not cut corporate taxes, when we did not reduce that percentage, we actually had a very robust economy. It has not impacted on businesses. That is the clear example. We did not see a downturn in the economy. We did not see businesses like banks or major oil companies leaving Canada because they did not get their corporate tax cut in 2005.

Why does the member think that his government's reckless action on reducing corporate taxes by almost 35% will give that added incentive to this economy when history has not shown that to be the case?

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to some of the things the hon. member brought up in his speech.

He referred to a competitive advantage that we would have with tax cuts in our country. In reality, one of the biggest competitive advantages we have in the country, vis-a-vis our major trading partner, is our public medicare system. To corporations in the country, that represents a significant advantage over American companies, and it is something we have to maintain. To maintain it, we need revenue and we need to have the balance of corporations supporting the revenue flow to these types of activities.

What we see now is a huge corporate tax cut. Does this help my riding? We have a diamond mining industry. Last summer I spent an extensive period of time interviewing the chief executive officers of different mines. Was their concern corporate tax cuts? No. Their concern was public investment in infrastructure that would allow those mines to stay open longer, that would allow those mines to exploit the resources.

Where will we find the dollars to invest in my territory to pull off the kind of continued resource development that can lead to profits in our country and a fair share for Canadians?

....

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

## EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 075

### CONTENTS

# Wednesday, April 9, 2008

## Public Safety

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, last night the RCMP in Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories, peacefully ended an armed standoff.

If this had happened in the community of Gameti, Northwest Territories, there would have been no police to respond.

The reason there are no police in Gameti, Colville Lake, Wrigley or Sachs Harbour is that Ottawa does not provide fair funding based on the real cost of government programs and services in the north.

The Conservatives are continuing this tradition. In the NWT, the so-called police officers recruitment fund covers about 75% of the cost of one constable, three-quarters of a crime fighter.

The NWT's solicitor general says, "We're actually kind of disappointed at the allocation because it's based on a per capita, with just a small top-up to the territories".

It should have been clear that more funding is needed after two officers were killed in the north. Just like the Liberals, the Conservatives talk a great line on the north but they will not walk the walk.

\* \* \*

....

## Petitions

Security and Prosperity Partnership

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of Canadians from Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

This petition is a call to suspend the security and prosperity partnership of North American on continental integration.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to stop further implementation of the security and prosperity partnership of North America with the United States and Mexico until there is a democratic mandate from the people of Canada, until there is parliamentary oversight and consideration of the profound consequences on Canada's existence as a sovereign nation within this House of Commons.

I am very proud to present this petition.

\* \* \*

....

## Budget Implementation Act, 2008

The House resumed from April 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008

and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand again in Parliament and speak about the types of issues that the Conservative Party brings forth within a budget.

We have an amendment now in front of us dealing with Bill C-50 to separate some of the immigration issues that are extremely important to Canadians right across the country and in my riding as well.

We think it is absolutely imperative that the heavy-handed legislation that has been introduced through the budget process be taken out.

For myself and the constituents I represent, the situation with immigration is horrendous. The backlog means loss of productivity and loss of sense of identity for many people across the country. We need to change that, yes, but to change it as it is proposed, where we could arbitrarily choose those we wish to reward with the benefits of a properly working immigration system is really wrong.

We need to keep it democratic and we need to keep it fair across this country. That is why we have put this amendment forward and that is why we will continue to not support this bill as long it contains this type of effort.

Having said that, I would like as well to talk about the budget and the budget implementation bill. In reality, I have actually been harangued by many in the Conservative Party about my position to not support the budget. So, I would like to explain that to people and get it on the record.

The other day the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, the member for Macleod, claimed that my constituents were extremely disappointed with me for not supporting the budget. I do not understand why he would say that, but he continued by saying that a member from the Northwest Territories who did not support a northern residents tax reduction was really failing his constituents.

When we look at the record, we will see that for the past eight years I have been fighting, in three elections, to put forward the concept that fairness within the northern residents tax deduction needs to be addressed.

In this Parliament, I have been consistently bringing this issue up and putting it on the order paper. I have worked with my constituents across the Northwest Territories and in the other northern territories to raise petitions and to bring attention to this issue.

It is nice to see that the Conservative Party has picked up on the issue, but it did not get the job done. A 10% increase to the northern residents tax deduction is simply a convenience to the Conservative Party so that it can say to the electorate "We did this", when in fact what was required and was asked by all my constituents, whether they be labour, whether they be the chambers of commerce, or whether they be the legislative assemblies, was a 50% increase just to keep up with inflation for the past 20 years.

The Conservative Party did not get the job done in this budget with the northern residents tax deduction and it should be ashamed to try to fool Canadians into thinking that it did.

The Prime Minister was in my riding, in Yellowknife, a number of weeks ago. What did he do? He stood and harangued me for not supporting the budget. The Prime Minister took the time to tear into the member for Western Arctic because I did not support the budget. The Prime Minister used the northern residents tax deduction as a convenient tool to try to increase the electoral chances of his party in my riding. What a shame-faced effort that was by the Prime Minister.

That is the kind of common approach that I see this Conservative Party taking on so many issues for the north. It talks big about what it is doing for the north and yet everything it does has a hidden touch to it; it turns out to be less than what is expected.

(1630)

The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development came up north the other day and talked about what he had done for crime prevention, with the new fund he set up for police procurement in the north. He is offering up \$800,000 over five years to the Northwest Territories, an amount which the minister of justice in my territory admitted was only 70% of one police officer position.

In a territory that has extreme problems of distance, the cost to move police services across a vast area the size of one-sixth of the whole country of Canada, the government has offered up 70% of a police officer over the next five years to answer our needs. After the kinds of incidents in the north of over the last year with police, the troubles policemen have had, having to act on by themselves because they simply do not have the resources to implement the proper procedures used in normal situations and we this is what we get. Once again, the Conservative Party brags about a program that really amounts to nothing.

Then we go back to previous budgets wherein the Conservative government brought forward a new formula funding agreement, which at the time it touted as being very progressive. Once again, it was established that the funds would go to the three northern territories, not on what it would cost to provide services in the north, but on a per capita basis. Costs in the north are rising daily. The expanding economy in western Canada is driving up the costs to everyone to a great degree.

After the wonderful work the Conservative Party did with the new formula financing agreement, the territorial government now says it is \$135 million short. It will have to cut positions and very particular things that it needs to do to provide decent services within the Northwest Territories. Therefore, we have a problem right now.

When we talk about the Northwest Territories, it is an area where money is being made. We in the Northwest Territories want to see devolution. We want to see revenue sharing from resources, which is an important thing for us, but we do not want to be shorted on that as well.

When the Conservative government announced that it would continue the \$500 million socio-economic fund to be set up for the pipeline, what did it say about it? It said that the fund would not be available until the pipeline was guaranteed and that the fund was okay because it would come out of the royalties that would be accrued to the Mackenzie gas project. That is not a subsidy. That is simply giving us the money that should be ours.

If the Conservative Party is providing this fund to the north to mitigate socio-economic activities will come as a result of industrial expansion that will favour southern Canada, it should take that money out of the revenues that accrue to southern Canada, not the ones that come to the Northwest Territories. That is unfair. Once again it shows the nature of the Conservative Party when it comes to funding the north and giving it a fair share.

What about the Norman Wells project? Oil has been pumped through that pipeline from Norman Wells for some 20 years. Right now, the federal government will not put it on the table in devolution. It will not put the revenue from that project on the table. The Conservatives say that it is their money, that they traded royalties for ownership of the pipeline, that they own 33% of the pipeline and they will not share it with us in the Northwest Territories. They say that they will not give us our fair share. What kind of deal is that? What kind of respect for the Northwest Territories is that from the Conservative Party?

Would the Alberta MPs who sit in the House be satisfied with this kind of arrangement for their provinces? I do not think so. I think they would be up yelling like I am right now.

When it comes to the diamond mines, when the original environmental assessment was set up, the benefits the Northwest Territories were to receive were employment and business opportunities based on a certain rate of production. Some of the mines are exceeding their production by 50%. Do we see the government standing up for our interests in this? No. It continues to let it go, with bigger profits and bigger taxes that will accrue to the federal government. Where does that leave the people of the Northwest Territories?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**



Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's riding is next to mine, a riding from which I do get some things. They come in by air, by water and from the development that his riding depends on for its economy.

When the Conservative Party dealt with the capital gains exemption in the last budget, and it had been 20 years since it was increased, it said that it was fair, that it would raise it by 50%. That was the amount of inflation taken out the benefit over that time. What is different about the northern residents tax deduction? Why did we only get 10%? Is that because we are second class citizens up there? Is that because we do not deserve that kind of benefit, that we are not working hard, that we are not contributing to Canada? I do not think so. I think it is because the Conservative Party is treating the north badly.

I spoke to my minister of transport the other day, as well. He is a very positive guy. He would be positive at any time. I certainly hope that his positive nature will not be affected by any more trips to Ottawa to meet with the Conservative Party. If it is, I will have to try to encourage him to keep his smile, to keep working hard for the people of the Northwest Territories.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, when we are dealing with the Conservative Party, we are dealing with a party that is penny-wise and pound foolish when it comes to turning out things for Canadians. The Conservatives will give away pounds to the corporations. They will turn their pockets inside out for the corporations. However, when it comes to turning over dollars to hard-working Canadians across the country, to the veterans, to all those types of people, the pockets shut, a nervous look comes over their faces and we do not see the generosity they have shown to many of their corporate friends.

....

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 076**

**CONTENTS**

**Thursday, April 10, 2008**

**Budget Implementation Act, 2008**

The House resumed from April 9 consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I too am puzzled by the comments made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Yes, and I am also puzzled by the comments that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development made.

I guess he did not see the poll that was conducted in the *Yellowknifer* as well, which unanimously supported my position to stand up to the Conservative Party that only provided an increase of 10% in the northern residents tax deduction.

I say this to the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. The New Democratic Party does not stand and say that the government has taken our money that it should be allotted to housing in Bill C-48. It applied it and that is great, but that money is going to be sunsetted.

The minister of housing in the Northwest Territories is distressed by the fact that we are going to be running out of money for housing that can assist aboriginal and non-aboriginal people across the territory in getting affordable housing. This is the case. There is nothing new for housing in this budget. It is a disgrace.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for talking about housing. Housing across the country and in northern regions is a subject of great concern. The minister of housing in the Northwest Territories indicated that the only programs available from the federal government have a sunset clause after next year. Then there will be no money for housing for people in the north. Is that a similar situation in the south?

Do we have this thing happening where the federal government, basically under the direction of the Conservative Party, is getting out of housing entirely?

....

Motions in amendment

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP)**

moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-33, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing line 13 on page 3 with the following:

“Canada, including a review of the progress made in the preparation and implementation of the regulations referred to in subsection 140(1), should be undertaken by such commit-”

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak to this amendment, although it is not the complete amendment that we were looking for in this bill and certainly not an amendment that would lead us to understand how this bill would impact on Canada.

Bill C-33, as put forward by the agriculture minister and through the agriculture committee, is enabling legislation. It would give the government power to make regulations that would open up the ability for biofuels to be used in the Canadian transportation industry across the country. As such, it really does not have any of the characteristics outlined that may be the most important in dealing with this issue in the future.

Concerns are mounting around the world about the nature of the directions that countries have taken with the development of biofuels and with the promotion of ethanol from corn, sugar cane and soybeans. This movement, albeit having good intent, the process has shown and is showing a very detrimental impact on the food supply across the world. In much of the scientific material, it is not showing much improvement in environmental characteristics regarding greenhouse gas emissions and the use of agricultural land. The deforestation of land for the production of these crops has also

added to the environmental concerns that people around the world are starting to recognize and talk about.

With the amendments that I proposed, which have now been reduced to the one amendment, we felt there was a need to have greater understanding of the direction that Canada was going to take with its biofuels policy from the House of Commons, not simply leaving it in the hands of the government to make regulations but to have a fulsome and complete understanding in the House of Commons as to the nature of the kind of businesses that we are entering into with biofuels.

That is the nub of it in terms of the motion that we are putting forward here today. We are down to the single motion and I understand, through the process of Parliament, how this has happened, and I respect that. I trust that other members will respect that we are trying very hard to understand how we can ensure this bill will work for Canadians.

This bill also represents the promise of a \$2 billion expenditure by the government over a number of years toward subsidies to those who grow the product and develop the fuel that will be used in a 5% mix in gasoline across the country, as well with a significant percentage of biodiesel that will be produced.

The evidence is coming in quite strong that the greenhouse gas emissions from the development of the industry so far across the world have been less than satisfactory. If one includes the deforestation that has taken place in many countries outside of Canada that have bought into the biofuel idea, we find that greenhouse gas emissions per unit of energy consumed in a person's vehicle in this biofuel mix actually turn out to be higher, and that is unfortunate.

(1540)

As well, there are potentially other ways in which this industry could go where we would see improvements in the greenhouse gas emissions. With the use of corn ethanol, we see about a 20% improvement in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over conventional gas coming from farm production. However, that creates the problem of using greater quantities of arable land in order to produce corn for ethanol production.

In the United States, through its programs, 16% of its corn production is now turned into ethanol, and it is looking at increasing that to 30%. It has caused an increase in the price of corn around the world. It is not healthy for mankind to be moving in this direction at a time when considerable poverty and malnourishment still exists around the world.

In Canada, the move toward a 5% ethanol content in our gasoline will not be accomplished on our own land. If that is the direction the government takes with regulation and with the investment of subsidies, we will find that much of the corn production will come from other countries, specifically the United States. We will be competing with the U. S. industry for the same product, as well as with people around the world who rely on it as a food stock and in many other ways.

This is a problem that we need to address in Parliament. We need to talk about it, understand it and include it in the bill that is being put forward. Simply allowing this to move to regulation without considering the desirable characteristics and the direction the government will take when it does produce those regulations is not proper governing. It does not represent careful choice.

We saw that in the agricultural committee when it reviewed the bill. My colleague, our agricultural critic, tried unsuccessfully to put forward amendments that would allow more careful consideration of this issue. Many witnesses came before the committee but most of their testimony was in vain. We have come to where this bill is now at report stage.

Most of the political parties in this Parliament at one time or another have supported the concept of biofuels and yet, as we move along in the world, opinion is changing rapidly about the nature of what we are creating.

I had the opportunity earlier this week to have lunch with the minister of energy from Great Britain where biofuels was a topic of discussion. When he was asked what the thinking was of the European Union and his own country with regard to biofuels, he said that we needed to change what we were doing. When asked if this could be done through regulation, he said that we needed to have some policy that outlines the direction that we need to take with biofuels.

There is an emerging consensus around the world that, however well-intentioned the move to biofuels is, the end result is not practically looking to be the way that we wanted it to be. The best laid plans of men and mice sometimes go astray. In the case of biofuels, I think it is quite correct that we need to be very careful. Canada is at an advantage right now. We have not passed any laws. Since we have not entered into the large scale production of biofuels with any particular process, we can make sensible and correct choices that can lead this country in a direction that will work.

(1545)

It is imperative that we deal with this issue in Parliament. It is imperative that we understand the direction we are going in. It is imperative that the people of Canada understand what we are doing, how we are working toward the future of our country, how we are making correct choices about our energy future.

It is not good enough to simply say, "Here is enabling legislation. Let's just turn it over to the government". The government has not won that kind of respect yet. The government has not demonstrated that kind of commitment to climate change. It has not demonstrated that kind of commitment to energy security. It is not demonstrated those commitments that would make this kind of choice to simply turn over enabling legislation in the fashion that we are prepared to do in order make the correct choice. We are really caught on the horns of a dilemma.

I will leave my comments there. I am very happy to engage in this debate. It is a debate that needs the attention of Parliament.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, subparagraph 140(1)(g)(iii) is the determining clause, "the adverse effects from the use of the fuel...on the environment, on human life or health, on combustion technology and on emission control equipment...". We have a process that would expand the review to ensure it encompasses all the details within the bill and would help out with that.

The amendment is taken in the absence of the other amendments that were declared out of order, and I recognize that. I will attempt in all ways to ensure that we proceed correctly with the amendment. The member can take it that the amendment will, in fulsome detail, help with the review process as outlined in the bill.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, the situation in the world speaks for itself on food prices right now. That is probably what we are having trouble with in response to the legislation. The situation in the world is changing. What may have been appropriate two years ago is changing rapidly.

We want to ensure that we make legislation that is good for the future, not good for yesterday or even today, but that works as we move along in the future. I am sure that is the ultimate goal of everyone in the House of Commons.

I do not particularly think this is a partisan issue to deal with the changing situation in the world as we speak. It is incumbent on all members to view very carefully what we are attempting to accomplish with the bill and put it into a perspective that will work. When we say that—

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, in some ways, my colleague's speech and the questions that followed are making my point in saying that there is very much a need to set standards and understand where those standards are going to go before we pass enabling legislation for

this particular industry. We have an industry that we can influence, that we can put in the right direction, that we can give those qualifications to that will drive it toward being greenhouse gas compliant and that will drive it toward investors investing in land that will be used strictly for the production of biofuels. Those sorts of things are available to us right now. They should be considered.

The member has made the point quite clearly that he wants these things, so why would we not include these in a bill in a very careful fashion?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member across the way for his comments. I want to touch back on this review. A review of policy is fine when we are dealing with things that we can change easily.

What is going to happen here with the industry is that it will move ahead in a certain fashion. The industry will make investments. Farmers are going to line up land and change their agricultural practices. There will be many things that go ahead once we put this bill in place, once the regulations are in place, and once the subsidies go on.

A review two years from now may be at the start of an industry. It may be when industry has just made major investments and it is not going to be a great time to decide that we have made the wrong decision here, made the wrong choices or moved in the wrong direction. The time to decide what the right direction is, is before we start.

That is why quite clearly my colleague on the agriculture committee brought forward many recommendations. I spoke to this issue when it was in Parliament before. We are saying it again to the hon. member across the way, do you really think that a review two years from now is going to--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on my colleague's speech because he touched on the issue that there are many uses for biomass product. In fact, a paper that was presented to the agricultural committee showed that if one wanted to get a better greenhouse gas reduction at a lower cost, it would be much simpler to make up straw pellets or wood pellets and put them into existing thermal situations than it is to create either cellulosic ethanol or just corn ethanol. The return is much greater.

There are a lot of unanswered questions even about the nature of biomass energy within this country. I would recommend that hon. members take a look at the study that was done by a Canadian company. Samson was the primary researcher on it from Quebec. It lays out very clearly what the issues are around the use of wood products or any other organic product in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

When you talk about the nature of the interaction between wood pellet development in northern Ontario and the use of pulp in the industry, could you elaborate on that issue a bit more?

....

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 077**

**CONTENTS**

**Friday, April 11, 2008**

**The Environment**

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, more and more people in the north are concerned that review boards meant to protect the environment are becoming make work projects for Conservatives.

The most recent example of this patronage was the eleventh hour appointment of the failed Conservative candidate from the last election to the chair of the most important of these environmental protection boards, replacing the longstanding nominated incumbent.

Why is the minister ignoring the spirit and intent of these boards, which is to bring an independent northern voice to environmental assessments, by deciding that the only important qualification for the position is one's history with the Conservative Party?

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**Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, all the appointments that we make throughout Canada come from a very talented pool of qualified individuals, and that is the same in this case. Our record on the north is without parallel. Not since the Diefenbaker years has a prime minister focused so much on our northern issues.

In that member's own territory we can look to the *Yellowknifer* that said that our budget was one of the most progressive for the north in many years. I find it hard to imagine why that member is not supportive of the initiatives we have taken in the north.

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**39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 079**

**CONTENTS**

**Tuesday, April 15, 2008**

**Controlled Drugs and Substances Act**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-26, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, today it is my turn to speak on Bill C-26, a bill introduced quite a while ago by the Conservative Party that has now come forward for more debate.

If we look at the history of the concern over the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act in this country, we will see that the pattern has been in a fashion that is different from what we are dealing with here today. Many people of my generation and the generation that grew up in the 1960s looked to the leadership of the government. In the early 1970s, the government came out with the Le Dain commission report, which made certain recommendations about the use of controlled substances at that time.

It went on from there. In the late 1970s in Parliament, many of the politicians of the day were more open-minded about questions of drug use in Canada, especially those who dealt with what was probably the largest single illegal drug used in Canada, cannabis. At that time, they were moving toward a different point of view on that particular controlled substance.

Then, of course, we had the introduction of the Reagan era in the 1980s. Through many of the international law enforcement agencies, the United Nations and many of the protocols at that time, we saw much hardening of attitudes toward the illegal use of drugs from the United States, which filtered through to the rest of the world. In this Parliament, that led, I am sure, to in some ways kowtowing to the United States and to going away from any semblance that we would go in the direction of the probably 20% to 25% of Canadians who use certain drugs at certain times. We made that conscious decision.

Once again, in the intervening years, the war on drugs went on and on. We saw the results in many third world countries. We saw the results in the United States.

Certainly we do not want Canada to follow the U.S. on its drug policy. Many people in the U.S. do not want us to follow them on the path the U.S. took through the 1980s and 1990s with highly restrictive legislation that led to incredible hardship and incredible increases in incarceration in the United States. The situation grew to where the United States as a population ranks first in the world in per capita incarceration, with roughly 5% of the earth's population but 25% of the total incarcerated population in the world.

Of the 2.2 million people in the United States behind bars today, roughly half a million are locked up for drug law violations and hundreds of thousands more for related drug offences. The war on drugs in the United States costs the U.S. government \$40 billion a year in direct costs and tens of billions of dollars more in indirect costs. That is useful information for all Canadians to think about when we approach the question of controlled substances.

We have a bill here that we in the NDP are opposed to and I am glad we are, because it is a hodgepodge of various types of efforts to bring to Canada what is in many respects a very harsh regime in regard to many of the controlled substances that are present in our society. They are used by people in our society and are there as a result of that use. When we speak to the direction that we should take on drugs now, in 2008, we find this bill to be absolutely the wrong direction.

(1720)

As well, it flies in the face of previous Parliaments in the new millennium, where we had much more direction, such that we actually would move in some ways to lessen the sentences for possession of drugs. We had a greater understanding of the need for harm reduction in dealing with many of the other drugs.

We can see that today with some of the facilities across Canada that deal with drugs such as heroin, such as Insite, the injection site in Vancouver. I went to a presentation the other morning that was given by a woman who had worked at Insite for many years, including getting it established and working through the politics involved for many years. I wish every member of Parliament could have heard her heartfelt talk.

I wish they could have heard about the good that has come out of that kind of work in turning to harm reduction in a sensible and practical fashion for the many people in our society who, for one reason or another, do not make it. They fall off the path of righteousness and good grace and end up living on the streets.

These people are chronic drug users. They are the most victimized people in our society. This safe injection site in Vancouver has saved many lives, each one of them important. The life of every single Canadian should be important to us, should be meaningful to us and should get our attention.

I felt so strongly about it when I heard that speech. I would recommend that all members consider the good that comes from having tolerance and from understanding other people's situations and making our way toward that.

Instead, we are dealing with a bill today that is going the other way. Recent statistics have pointed out that over 24% of Canadians have used cannabis in the last year. Some 1% or 2% have used cocaine. Another 1% or 2% have used other substances. The crime industry in this country makes about \$10 billion a year from illegal drugs, of which the vast majority is cannabis.

We have a situation in Canada in which we have a lot of users. A lot of people do this and we are not going to change that with Bill C-26. However, what we will do with this bill is create a situation whereby more and more people will be targeted by this legislation for what they are doing. They will be directly targeted for any infractions of the Criminal Code, any of the things that go on in their daily lives.

That is what this bill does, and this bill is not what Canadians want. The majority of Canadians favour decriminalizing cannabis. They favour the medical use of cannabis. Our society is tolerant. We are not like this bill. This bill is different from what the vast majority of Canadians want.

The Conservative government has lumped many things into this legislation. It has included some things that it thinks might be attractive to its political base. The Conservatives have taken a stand that should guarantee the support of many of the people who support them already.

However, Bill C-26 is draconian in its approach to the problem. It is approaching the problem in a way that is the exact opposite of what we were doing a few years ago in this very House. That really is unfortunate. It is unfortunate that we have moved in this direction. It is unfortunate that the minority Conservative government feels it has the right and direction to do the things it is doing with respect to this legislation.

(1725)

I am glad our party is standing up against it. I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to it.

When we talk about mandatory minimum sentences and increased minimums for drug related crimes, this is a particularly flawed piece of legislation. In all cases, these types of crimes need the discretion of the judge. They need the judge, in these particular types of crimes, to have the ability to say whether granny with her pot plant in the corner is going to be put in jail for six months because it is the mandatory minimum that the bill proposes. The judge should really have a say and should have a way to deal with this in a correct fashion.

I know this is only the bottom of the heap in terms of where we are going with the bill. As it moves through other phases, we are seeing even greater sentences that would be given to people who--

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 082**

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**Friday, April 18, 2008**



## Question No. 221--

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regard to the Northern Residents Tax Deduction: (a) what is the rationale for changing the way the travel portion of the deduction is calculated; (b) how will this change affect the amount of money paid out through this deduction; (c) what is the estimated difference between what will be paid out following this change compared to what would have been paid out if this change had not been made; (d) what is the estimated amount that would have been paid out had this change not been made; and (e) what is the estimated number of tax filers who are affected by this change?

### **Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, the northern residents deduction, NRD, consists of two income tax deductions that are available to residents of the north who live in the prescribed northern zone or intermediate zone: a travel deduction and a residence deduction.

The travel deduction allows taxpayers to deduct the value of up to two employer-paid vacation or family related trips per year and an unlimited number of employer-paid medical trips, the benefit of which is included in income for tax purposes, from their income for income tax purposes. Since the deduction is based on the cost of travel, any inflationary increases are effectively accommodated for under this deduction. Accordingly, since the introduction of the NRD in 1987, no changes have been made to the travel component. The budget presented in the House of Commons on February 26, 2008, proposed a 10 percent increase to the residency component in support of a comprehensive northern strategy to help the north realize its full social and economic potential. The increase in the residency component is designed to further assist in drawing skilled labour to northern and isolated communities. This measure will be effective as of January 1, 2008.

In particular, the maximum daily residency deduction will be increased from \$15 to \$16.50. This increase will bring the maximum annual amount of the residency deduction to \$6,022.50, \$16.50 multiplied by 365 days, from \$5,475, \$15 multiplied by 365 days, for residents of the northern zone and to \$3,011.25 from \$2,737.50 for residents of the intermediate zone.

When combined with the basic personal amount of \$9,600 and the Canada employment credit of \$1,019, a single resident of the north will be able to earn up to \$16,600 tax free in 2008. For that same year, it is estimated that about 189,000 individuals will benefit from the increase. Including this increase of \$10 million in additional tax relief per year, it is estimated that the NRD will reduce federal revenues by \$150 million in 2008-09 and by \$155 million in 2009-10.

Widespread support for this important Government of Canada initiative has been noted from northern leaders. For instance, Yellowknife Mayor Gord Van Tighem noted it was, "something we've been asking for a significant period of time...(it) will mean more spending into local economies and further reduce the cost of living".

In addition to increasing the generosity of the residency component of the NRD, the budget presented in the House of Commons on February 26, 2008 also announces new measures that will protect and secure Canada's sovereignty and create more economic opportunities in the north, including: \$34 million over two years for geological mapping to support economic development; extension of the mineral exploration tax credit for an additional year; and \$8 million over the next two years for a commercial harbour in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.

Since 2006, the government has made important investments in the north, including investments to advance social and economic development in the territories through a \$300 million northern housing trust and \$195 million between 2006-07 and 2008-09 in increased territorial formula financing payments.

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 083

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## Monday, April 28, 2008

### Canadian Environmental Protection Act

The House resumed from April 10 consideration of Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, as well as Motion No. 2.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I found my hon. colleague's presentation to be thoughtful and it focused on what is happening on the ground.

I was pleased to hear about all the different initiatives that are going on in Quebec with respect to the use of biofuels. This is very positive, but it also poses the important question, how can we determine the winners and losers in the biofuel industry as we move forward?

What we are trying to do with the amendment is to give us some flexibility in the approach we take. We in this party do not think that there is trust and confidence in the government to put forward regulations that are going to apply in a very good fashion to all the different types of initiatives that are available under biofuels, or as I like to call them, bioenergy.

In my constituency in the far north we are rapidly transforming the fuel used to heat major institutional buildings to wood pellets. Right across northern Canada including northern Quebec many communities are strictly on diesel fuel or fuel oil for their buildings. Fuel oil is \$1.30 a litre. The wood pellets that are imported from Alberta are half that cost.

There is still much work to be done in this field to understand the nature of the incentives and programs, and the conditions we should be attaching to the biofuels industry. Does the member agree there is a need to have that oversight?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, quite specifically, the amendment we are debating right now is an oversight amendment, which would give us more control over the process of the development of the biofuels approach in Canada, the bioenergy approach. Why will her party not support the amendment? It will give us the time to deal with the issues as they come up and ensure that the government acts correctly?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I rise again on this particular issue. I put forward the amendments to this legislation and one amendment has been accepted. The amendment would provide more

oversight to the process that my colleague on the agricultural committee put forward as an amendment. The amendment would provide a two year review and would enhance the bill by providing more review over the actual regulations as put forward by the government. As I have pointed out before, that is a very significant thing.

Some great work has been done in Quebec. The REAP institution, located in Quebec City, demonstrated at committee that even the move toward cellulosic ethanol would really not be cost effective or as potentially greenhouse gas useful by simply converting cellulosic material, whether it be wood or waste from agricultural processes, to thermal energy. Thermal energy can be used in homes and commercial businesses to replace other fossil fuel products, and in the case of Quebec, for instance, replacing liquefied natural gas, a product we are now looking at importing from Russia or Qatar.

My colleague said her party is supporting the bill, but you really are not. You are supporting a bill that would enable the government to do exactly what it wants with the regulations right now. It would enable the government to reward whoever it wants, with Canadian tax dollars, to go ahead with biofuels rather than having some conditions attached which would give the real winners in the biofuel industry the leg up they need.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I do not think anyone can underestimate the food crisis. Our dollar has gone up considerably over the last number of years and that has sheltered Canadians a bit, but with the high cost of everything we have in this country, our consumer price index, for instance, keeps out energy and food costs so that Canadians do not even get the message about what is happening in this country.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for that good presentation on the nature of our concerns. Our concerns lie with the enabling nature of this bill on this very important topic. We tried very diligently in the agriculture committee to put forward conditions that should be attached to the kinds of directions we are to take. If we are trying to do something to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this country, then the bill should make that part of the solution.

This particular work on biofuels was also part of Bill C-30. Within the larger bill there were opportunities to set the conditions within the industry for the direction that we are taking. This bill, without Bill C-30, has none of that. This is a piece of work that was stripped bare and rammed through the committee against the good advice of many people who support the biofuel industry, and now we are ramming it through Parliament and we do not have a chance to take a look at the meat, the regulations.

I can support this bill if we have the opportunity to make sure that we do a good job for Canadians. I would ask my colleague to give me some of the reasons why the Liberals and the Conservatives might not want to support this simple effort to make sure that we do the right thing here.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this debate back a little to the procedure that we have followed so far in the House with the bill. The billions of dollars that the government would spend on this was portrayed as an environmental concern directly related to greenhouse gas emissions, but the bill went to the agricultural committee. It only had that scrutiny.

The scrutiny it had was with the interest groups that were most likely to benefit monetarily from the process that was to be put in place. What the bill needs is the scrutiny of those who are concerned about the environment.

When we have a bill in front of us that could allow corn ethanol imported from the United States with a higher greenhouse gas emission characteristic than if we left the doggone gas in the vehicle, does the government not think this is important enough to have a debate about in the House of Commons?

....

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## 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 086

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Thursday, May 1, 2008

### Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999

The House resumed from April 28 consideration of Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of Motion No. 2.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** We don't have control over that; we only have control of this.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague talked about not understanding why there would be regulations coming forward. Bill C-33 is an empty box that is going to be filled with the regulations that will guide the industry in the future. This is the case. There is nothing in this legislation that sets conditions or terms as to how the biofuel industry is going to develop in Canada.

Quite clearly, section 140 states:

The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Minister, make regulations for carrying out the purposes of section 139...

Some portions of the act talk about the different types of regulations in the act, regulations made under sections 93 and 140, et cetera, quantities of released production capacity. The substance or the fuel source, interestingly enough, is not something that is going to be dealt with in the regulations. Under the regulations we are going to decide where the fuel is coming from. We are going to make a decision about whether biofuels are going to be a local product, a national product or an international product.

We are going to make those kinds of decisions in regulations rather than here in Parliament where those decisions should be made, such as the substance of the fuel's

commercial destination, the substance of the fuel's physical and chemical properties, how much greenhouse gas emissions the fuel produces, the chemical properties.

Once again, through regulation later on, the government, rather than Parliament, is going to decide how our industry develops. That is why we put the oversight amendment forward, to provide parliamentarians with the opportunity to actually speak to the substance of this new industry. I would ask my hon. colleague, is that not a good enough reason to support having an oversight provision within this bill?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague and my next-door neighbour from Yukon on his speech. We in the Northwest Territories and Yukon share a lot of interest in reducing energy costs.

When we talk about cellulosic ethanol, we are talking about a process which converts cellulosic material into ethanol at about a 40% energy efficiency conversion ratio. In other words, 40% of the energy within the cellulose is converted into ethanol.

Right now we have a very simple way of converting cellulose product at 100% efficiency in Canadian homes and businesses. We can put it into coal plants. It is called pelletization. Any cellulosic product can be pelletized, such as wood. Without the intense effort that we are going into, to produce cellulosic ethanol, we can replace natural gas in homes and coal in coal-fired plants. We can do a number of things, where thermal energy is required, with cellulosic product at a very low cost and at 100% efficiency.

By developing the cellulosic ethanol business, we are entering into a less efficient way of using a product that exists right across this country and could be used in every local community to heat our homes, to do a number of things, including Yukon where of course people right now are suffering with \$1.30 a litre cost of fuel oil. In the Northwest Territories right now, my government, which I am very proud of, is converting its buildings to use wood pellets because it is half the cost.

What we see here is a move toward an industry-based solution which does not really serve everyone across the country. To my hon. colleague, would it not make more sense to use the most efficient way of using our energy resources to produce the best result for Canadians?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member goes to the BIOCAP Canada site, there is a very clear and definitive analysis of greenhouse gas emissions from both pelletization and use of ethanol or any others, soya-based diesel, canola-based diesel, or a number of others. He will get a very clear picture of what is going on with the energy transfers with all these types of products.

As I say, the \$1.30 is for fuel oil in the Northwest Territories, which we use to heat our homes. We could certainly convert our homes to use wood pellets inasmuch as we wanted to do that.

....

# EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 087

## CONTENTS

### Friday, May 2, 2008

#### Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to hear the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food speak again to this subject. The last time he spoke I asked him a question about the relative merits of what he was saying about the greenhouse gas reductions that are engaged with biofuels. He was talking about four megatonnes of reduction that would come from his 5% program in fuel with the \$2.2 billion investment.

A careful scientific analysis by the BIOCAP Canada Foundation shows that with corn ethanol we would get a 21% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which is what we would normally get with gasoline if it were bought in Canada. If we buy it from U.S. producers we will have a negative greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

With the 21% Canadian, what would happen if we were to make all the corn in Canada and feed it into our ethanol system to produce the 5%? The vehicle fleet in Canada produces 100 megatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; 5% of 100 megatonnes is 5 megatonnes and 20% of 5 megatonnes is much less than 4 megatonnes.

Why does the minister keep using these figures when he obviously has the same kinds of studies that we are working from? If he has some study that shows that he is getting 4 megatonnes of reduction from his program, costing Canadian taxpayers \$2.2 billion, he should put it on the line.

The minister keeps referring to the idealistic opposition to not simply blindly moving ahead but carefully considering what we are doing with biofuels, that includes such idealistic lefties as Terence Corcoran, Don Martin and Gwyn Morgan who are all part of the NDP and are idealistic soulmates. How does the minister see these people as our idealistic compatriots?

....

## The Environment

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, last week, it was reinforced just what an environmental disaster the tar sands are. At least 500 ducks were killed when they landed in the toxic sludge of a Syncrude tailing pond.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said that he would look into the killing of these ducks. More study was the answer people along the Athabasca-Mackenzie watershed heard from the Liberals. Action to deal with all the environmental damage caused by the tar sands is needed now.

When will the Conservative government take action to prevent more damage from the out of control development of the tar sands?

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**Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, we are tremendously concerned about the effect on wildlife and the incident that took place outside of Fort McMurray.

Environment Canada officials and enforcement officers, together with the representatives from the Canadian Wildlife Service, are on the scene and are conducting an investigation. If charges are to be laid they will lay them.

We will bring those responsible for environmental crimes to justice. That is why we got such a big increase in the budget for environmental enforcement, an increase, I would remind the member, that he voted against.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, we are not just talking about the death of 100 ducks, but the damage being done to the water, air and earth of northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories from this out of control development.

Thousands of people, many aboriginal, who call this part of Canada home are suffering because of the environmental damage of the tar sands. The welfare of aboriginal people and transboundary pollution are federal responsibilities.

The government's plan has been to let the companies police themselves, a plan for disaster if I have ever heard of one.

When will the Conservatives shoulder their responsibility—

(1145)

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**The Speaker:**

The hon. Minister of the Environment.

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**Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, I do know that the member supports the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, which is very interesting given his comments, to help flow petroleum products to market.

We reject the Liberal approach, which is nothing on air quality in the oil sands and nothing on global warming. The only thing the previous government did for the oil sands is give them a big fat tax break.

When this government wanted to rescind it, that member of the NDP voted against it. I say shame on him and shame on the Liberal Party.

\* \* \*

....

**Question No. 229--**

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regards to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board: (a) what was the rationale for choosing Mr. Richard Edjericon as the new board chair; and (b) what was the rationale for not choosing Ms. Gabrielle Mackenzie Scott to continue as the board's chair?

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, in response to a) The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board indicated to the minister that the board approved the nominations of both Ms. Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott and Mr. Richard Edjericon as potential chair for the minister's consideration. They further clarified that if neither candidate is considered to be acceptable, the board would be pleased to submit additional names and would do so expeditiously.

As per section 12 of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, which states that "...the Chairperson of a board shall be appointed by the federal minister from persons

nominated by a majority of the members”, the minister considered the nominations and, after evaluation, appointed Mr. Richard Edjericon to a 3-year term as chair on March 29, 2008.

Mr. Richard Edjericon has all the required qualifications to provide leadership and participation to the board, and will contribute to the success of the important work that lies ahead.

In response to b) Ms. Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott’s term expired on March 28, 2008, after serving a 3-year term as Chair.

....

## **Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, be read the third time and passed.

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to talk about biofuels because, unlike what has been projected about the New Democratic position, we support a properly managed biofuel programs in this country. What we are trying to do in the House of Commons is to get to a point where we have policies that we can present to the Canadian public and that industry can understand where we are going. We want to be assured that what we are doing is correct and is working in the best interests of Canadians on all the fronts that have been purported to be useful in terms of the development of a biofuel industry in Canada.

The comments of the Liberals and Conservatives today and yesterday about our participation in this debate remind me of the old saying: A half truth is like half a brick; one can throw it twice as far and it hurts just as much. That is what they are doing. They are presenting half-truths again. That is not what we want in Parliament. We want to have an honest and structured debate about the relative merits of what we are doing as a Parliament. That is what we are after. That is what we are focused on.

This is not an ideological debate. The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food claimed in his speech that somehow the ideological forces of the left were driving this debate on biofuels, creating opposition to the Conservatives' implementation of a program in exactly the way they want through a bill that has no conditions attached to it, much as what was indicated by my colleague from Ottawa South. After he got over the need to bash away at us, he spoke quite eloquently about all the things that we have been bringing forward in Parliament, all the issues that have not been resolved around biofuels.

When we talk about an ideological bent, we can refer to all the different people who have spoken lately of their concerns about the direction biofuels are taking not only in Canada but around the world. And yes, we do have what we might call a fellow traveller in the Prime Minister of Great Britain whose government over many years promoted biofuels, but who has now said, “We have to go back and look at what we are doing”.

New Democrats are always willing to examine what we have proposed to see the merits within it. If we have policies that are not perfect, we adjust them. I can see that too with the Conservatives. They had a policy which was clearly articulated by the Prime Minister during the election. He said that the Conservatives were not going to touch income trusts. What did he do when he came to the realization, that we already supported, that these were hurting the economy? He changed his position. We saw the result.

This is a forum. The government must be flexible. We must look at the situation in front of us and do the very best possible for Canadians. The New Democrats are standing up



again trying to ensure that the debate is useful and relevant and that we get the consideration we want of the bills in front of us.

The biofuels bill is an empty box which the Conservatives can fill with goodies for their friends. They can fill it with policies that will help large corporations. They can fill it with policies that will bring products from other countries that are going to compete with our Canadian farmers. This will create more dislocation and will not give us the kind of environmental return we could get from our own farmers. New Democrats do not trust the Conservative government to do the right thing.

(1215)

In committee, we were consistent. We brought up conditions that we wanted to see in the bill that would ensure we did the right thing with biofuels. Those were opposed by both the Liberals and the Conservatives. They did, however, give the NDP an amendment to have a review on a two year basis. It is a good idea and it is almost all we needed, but not quite.

A two year review will already assume that the industry is up and running, that it is investing, that farmers are changing their production of different types of agriculture products to match up to the legislation in place. This was not quite enough. With this empty box, we needed to have a review of what the Conservatives would fill the box with before it went out to the public. How is this opposing biofuels?

This is giving some surety to Canadians that where the economy is going is correct. How can this be interpreted except in terms of this half truth? Once again, one can throw it further to try to hurt the others just as much. That is the truth of what has gone on in Parliament to date.

When I heard the member for Ottawa South talk eloquently about the problems with the biofuel policy in front of us, when he mentioned all the studies that had not been done, when he mentioned all the things that were not in place, why was he then so insistent that we flash forward with this policy when he had all those unanswered questions? Did it have anything to do with the investment that would go to his riding from the \$2.2 billion, which are on the table right now as part of the public funds that will be invested in the biofuels industry? I ask the member for Ottawa South to look into his heart and see whether this is part of his motivation.

Right now across northern Canada, and it is not just in the Northwest Territories, it is in Yukon, Nunavut, northern Quebec, Labrador, we are experiencing a massive increase in heating costs and costs of generation with fossil fuels, fuel oil. Fuel oil prices affect hundreds of thousands of people across northern Canada and many rural people in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba. It affects rural people in Ontario, the Maritimes and Quebec who are not attached to a natural gas distribution system and use fuel oil. These costs are going through the roof.

Are there any solutions? There are solutions and we are putting those solutions to work in Yellowknife right now. We are buying biomass products from Alberta and running our larger buildings and many homes on wood pellets. It is easily transportable, cellulosic material that is simply pelletized and provides that opportunity.

This can spread right across northern Canada. This could have been available to everybody in the country if there had been one thing, and that was parity in the bioenergy market where the greenhouse gas reductions were compared with biofuels and bioenergy, where values and incentives were based on how much we could return to the different types of objectives that were set into the policy. If that were the case, we could do so much more to reduce the cost of living for people across country who are not attached to a natural gas delivery system.

Personally, as a northern resident, although I use biomass myself, I have full sympathy for us in building our bioenergy industry across the country. Yet there is no parity and no discussion of this. Nor is there any discussion of the way to use different forms of energy. We are on a biofuel path that may or may not be appropriate. This does not mean we should preclude the other forms of bioenergy available to us.

(1220)

We are investing \$500 million in a cellulosic ethanol pilot plant. The BIOCAP study prepared by REAP-Canada, which was presented in the agriculture committee, speaks to cellulosic ethanol quite well. Cellulosic product that could easily be used in thermal capacities has a 39% efficiency in conversion of that energy. In other words, when the bioenergy product is converted into biofuel in a cellulosic ethanol plant, 60% of the energy is lost off the top. Huge capital costs are attached to this as well.

A typical commercial cellulosic plant, as the one proposed in Idaho, would have an estimated cost of \$250 million U.S. to process approximately 68 million litres of cellulosic ethanol each year. That works out to about \$175 a gigajoule in investment to return one gigajoule of energy. When we look at other forms of using cellulosic product, for instance, in replacing thermal energy in people's homes, in power generation, we are looking at about \$5 a gigajoule investment in the plant. We are creating an industry that stretches right across the country and works for everyone.

These are the types of examples we need to talk about in Parliament. We need legislation that will create a level playing field for bioenergy and biofuels and will ensure that we are putting money into the best things possible for Canadians.

I am not trying to be a Luddite. I am speaking to the real concerns of Canadians. We are running out of natural gas in our country. National Energy Board projections indicate that we will be a net importer of natural gas by 2020 with all supplies in. This is a crisis, and one perhaps not well articulated by the government because it does not want to go in that direction. It wants us to purchase liquefied natural gas from other countries at exorbitant prices, with no particular economic benefit to our whole economy.

The opportunities for bioenergy everywhere are great and for biofuel equally great. We need to move ahead with policy that works. I do not see that here. The legislation does not address the issues in front of us. It does not provide significant return to Canadians in terms of greenhouse gas reductions. We invest \$2.2 billion to get a couple of megatonnes of reduction. That is \$1 billion a megatonne.

Where is the comparative analysis that should have taken place about the kinds of investments the government should make in different forms of subsidies that would go to different things and provide better analysis? These analyses are available. BIOCAP Canada did a complete assessment of that.

The greenhouse gas reduction cost for corn ethanol is some \$375 per kilogram. Using biomass in pelletized form for either heating or for electrical generation would be a \$50 a kilogram cost reduction.

The numbers are just staggering when we think of what we are doing. Why are we doing it? Because a number of people in the other parties have specific interests in the ridings. They see this as an investment to be made right away so they can move this forward in a way that really does not make good policy. It may make good sense in the next election for these people, but in the long term is it really the sense of what we want to do as a responsible member of the international community? I do not think so.

(1225)

Having recognized the inadequacies of the legislation, as solidly supported by my Liberal colleagues in their speeches, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "That", and replacing them with the following:

Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, be not now read a third time, but referred back to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food for the purpose of reconsidering clause 2 with a view to making sure that both economic and environmental effects of introducing these regulations do not cause a negative impact on the environment or unduly influence commodity markets.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, the question really fits very well with what I have been proposing. I wanted to see conditions that would have linked themselves to greenhouse gas emissions for the development of the biofuels industry.

In other words, we would have some condition that would give a priority to those biofuel production lines, those uses of biological energy, to produce fuel so that the incentives would be tailored to the greenhouse gas reductions.

To move to 5% ethanol in our gasoline we are going to have to grow about 4.5 million tonnes of corn or else we are going to buy it from the United States. The studies that are done by BIOCAP Canada, a very respectable study, suggest that corn ethanol from the United States or corn products from the United States actually have a negative greenhouse gas life cycle production. In Canada it is slightly better at 21%.

Biodiesel on the other hand from canola is probably the most attractive option when we are talking about the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the use of a particular product. So when we talk about canola, we are talking about a product that actually does have some of the characteristics that we are looking for in a product. We can see a net offset of CO<sub>2</sub> of 57%. That is reasonable but it is still not as good as perhaps using bioenergy simply as a heating product where we are going to get a greenhouse gas reduction closer to 90% to 95%. Those are good numbers. Those are really solid numbers.

Therefore, when we think of the bioenergy industry, yes, we should think of it in terms of greenhouse gas reductions and we should be very careful about what we are doing with it so that we do achieve the goals that we have, and we do move ourselves toward Kyoto compliance.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member over there and the Liberal Party for doing the work with BIOCAP because it is a very respected organization. Unfortunately, its funding is not going to continue.

Having said that, the numbers are far apart. If the numbers were closer together, if there was some kind of fudge factor in the numbers, we could say they were at least close, but these numbers put the greenhouse gas emission reductions way different. They put the cost per kilogram of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction to the government at very different levels. Some of them are at factors of 10.

When I talk about scientific studies that show factors of 10 on the scale and when we are talking about what is logically good for the economy, I do not think I have to worry so much about the veracity of the precise numbers. These are very large differences.

When we talk about agricultural issues, I defer to the agricultural committee. These were raised in the agricultural committee. They were raised on very important issues that talk about what kind of land is used. Are we going to deforest land to increase the yield of agricultural production in order to make this change?

We see what has happened in the United States where the increased corn production has led to less soy bean production which has led to increased soy bean production in third world countries where the environmental conditions are not very good, where there is a lot of displacement of people off the land. We see the interconnection between land and the resources as the changes are made.

I am not an agricultural specialist. I come from a place in this country where there is not much agricultural activity. My grandfather was a farmer but I do not have that practical experience on the land. I defer to, in terms of what should happen with land, to the agricultural committee. I would expect that the committee members have reams of studies that suggest what should be done with land in Canada. If they do not, if they are just making this up as they go along, that is wrong.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, really and truly the report that we received from the agricultural committee was that the bill moved along much too fast. It did not take into consideration all the types of things that needed to be looked at. The purpose of the motion is to get a stronger scientific policy position from the agriculture committee and—

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 088

CONTENTS

## Monday, May 5, 2008

Motions in Amendment

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP)**

moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 21.

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 22.

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-5, in Clause 23, be amended by replacing lines 23 and 24 on page 7 with the following:

• “contains nuclear material, financial security to”

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-5, in Clause 24, be amended by deleting lines 39 to 42 on page 7 and lines 1 to 18 on page 8.

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 26.

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 30.

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 32.

Motion No. 8

That Bill C-5, in Clause 34, be amended by deleting lines 15 to 23 on page 11.

Motion No. 9

That Bill C-5 be amended by deleting Clause 47.

Motion No. 11

That Bill C-5, in Clause 61, be amended by replacing lines 23 to 31 on page 16 with the following:  
“Majesty in right of Canada the total of all amounts paid by the Minister under this Act.”

Motion No. 12

That Bill C-5, in Clause 62, be amended by deleting lines 19 to 26 on page 17.

Motion No. 16

That Bill C-5, in Clause 66, be amended by deleting lines 3 and 4 on page 19.

Motion No. 17

That Bill C-5, in Clause 66, be amended by deleting lines 7 to 9 on page 19.

Motion No. 18

That Bill C-5, in Clause 66, be amended by deleting lines 10 to 12 on page 19.

Motion No. 21

That Bill C-5, in Clause 68, be amended by deleting lines 1 to 3 on page 20.

He said: Mr. Speaker, after many months, the government is again bringing forward Bill C-5, the nuclear liability and compensation act. In the intervening times, different types of issues on the nuclear liability front have arisen and a full interest in this issue has been heightened over the period of time involved.

No one in any party wants to stand in the way of good legislation or to stand in the way of the things that need to be done for Canadians. While we supported the bill at second reading to get it to committee and to look at the types of issues that needed to be dealt with within the nuclear liability context, the results were less than what we felt were essential for Canadians.

As a member of Parliament from the Northwest Territories, the people I represent have had much experience with nuclear contamination over the years. Even though our numbers are very small, we have had that experience and we understand the results of that.

We have a community in the Northwest Territories called Deline. It used to be called Fort Franklin. It also was called the village of widows because it was on the shores of Great Bear Lake where the first mining for uranium took place in Canada on a large scale. The Port Radium mine brought lots of yellowcake out there. It was handled by the people in the community to a great extent. Even today we have not seen the end of this incident. We are in Port Radium cleaning up the mine. The people of Deline have gone through countless years of anguish over the results of what happened in that nuclear industry.

When we talk about nuclear liability and the need to protect individuals from the results of nuclear accidents and contamination spills, we in the Northwest Territories have a track record that we go back to. We know what the track record has been with other Canadian governments. The fact that we are still at a \$650 million liability limit for nuclear installations in this country, in this day and age, strikes me as being the clearest indicator that work has not been done in this field.

As well, when it comes to more recent examples of contamination that have occurred in the Northwest Territories, I refer back to Cosmos 954 where we had a very small nuclear reactor in a Russian satellite that burned up over the Northwest Territories. The contamination from that unit was spread over 14,000 square kilometres. In fact, it required intensive searches by trained professionals throughout all our communities to locate very small amounts of nuclear contamination and eliminate them. It was a very expensive process.

What it showed us was how difficult it is to deal with nuclear contamination, how long the issues last and how long this goes on for in our society once there is a nuclear accident.

We felt that more work needed to be done on this bill. We put forward a number of amendments at committee but they were rejected by the Conservatives, the Liberals and, to a great extent, by the Bloc, which brings us here today with the amendments that we have in front of this House right now.

One of the key amendments that we are looking for is to take out any limit on nuclear liability. Unlimited amounts would probably be the preferred method to deal with it, just as Germany does. It has an unlimited liability on nuclear facilities. That means that whatever the costs are, when there is an accident those who are responsible for the plant will need to pay those costs.

(1340)

The \$650 million limit set in this bill pales next to that of our major trading partner, the United States of America, which has an \$8 billion to \$10 billion liability ceiling on its nuclear facilities. Most of our nuclear facilities are located in highly populated areas in southern Canada, areas similar to where the nuclear facilities are located in the United States.

Why should we think that our situation is remarkably different from the situation in the United States? Why should that be part of the equation? Is it because if we set the limit to where it should be, the nuclear industry would have to reflect the true costs of doing

business in this country? If we set the ceiling at \$650 million, would we be giving the industry another break and Canadians would not have a clear indication of the issues surrounding the industry and the associated costs?

The Conservatives are taking a very cavalier attitude toward nuclear safety. We saw that before Christmas. I do not want to denigrate the effort Parliament made with respect to the issues surrounding Chalk River, but it showed how much trouble we have working on issues around nuclear safety in this country. We saw the method by which these very serious issues were derailed by the government by its failure to pay attention to them. We saw the blame game that was played with the Nuclear Safety Commission.

Those things all stand out as stark examples of why we have to be very careful with the kind of legislation we are dealing with here today. We need to protect Canadians. The first and foremost job of this institution is to protect and enhance the lives of Canadians. This bill does not accomplish that.

Many of these amendments speak to the difficult time Canadians would have in trying to achieve compensation if there was a nuclear accident. Many of the proposed amendments would make it better for Canadians to get the compensation they should be entitled to receive. The amendments would make sure that all the issues surrounding a nuclear contamination incident would be addressed. They would assure Canadians about the compensation they would receive and that they would not be tied up in court forever trying to get that compensation.

Those are some of the issues that have brought us to this point. The NDP is not trying to obstruct Parliament. We are trying to get these issues out front for Canadians to make sure they understand what is at stake here with this nuclear liability bill. We are not going to simply push it forward so that some other restructuring in the nuclear industry can take place. We are not going to simply push it forward so the nuclear industry can be assured that it will not be judged by U.S. standards when there is a contamination accident and might be judged by these much softer Canadian standards.

These are all issues behind the legislation. These are all reasons that the legislation appeared when it did. We agreed that there was a need to move ahead with better nuclear liability provisions. We had hoped for a fulsome and useful debate in committee where we could put forward the correct type of amendments, but that did not happen, and that has brought us to this stage here in the House of Commons.

I urge all members to take a look at what we are doing here. I urge them to consider the amendments and to consider the spirit in which they have been presented.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to impute motives as to why this bill has taken six months to come back to Parliament for discussion. Certainly we had a most active and interesting debate around nuclear safety during December and into January concerning the Chalk River incident. That heightened the issues in the minds of Canadians. The issues are still there. We see the same kind of concern today as we saw during December and January. I do not think any delay of legislation is going to change that.

On the other point that my colleague mentioned in terms of the nuclear industry and where it is going, we see many actions taking place here. We hear talk about the restructuring of the nuclear industry as part of what is going on. Once again I am not able to impute motives. My job here is to speak to the liability issues within the bill.

I wholeheartedly ask members to consider whom we are protecting with this bill. How the bill should work to protect whom is key to a lot of what is going on here.

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 089

CONTENTS

**Tuesday, May 6, 2008**

## **Nuclear Liability and Compensation Act**

The House resumed from May 5 consideration of Bill C-5, An Act respecting civil liability and compensation for damage in case of a nuclear incident, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my hon. colleague on an issue to which he referred. He said that the bill appeared to be what the industry needs.

The concern we have in the New Democratic Party is not only what the industry needs, but what the citizens of Canada need. What do they need from a nuclear liability act? What do they need to protect them and ensure that when there is such a calamity in our country, that the compensation is done in a fair, open and prompt fashion and that the amounts geared to be put forward are adequate? How does the bill guarantee the rights of Canadians in receiving the kind of compensation that could be applicable in the event of a nuclear catastrophe?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, whom I worked with on the committee, for her interest in this bill and for her interest in these issues generally. I share some of her concerns.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources suggested that the amendments would mean we would be back at the \$70 million limit. No, the sum total of the amendments would mean there would be unlimited liability for nuclear accidents, much as there is in Germany.

We originally had taken a different position in the committee, but this is the position we could bring forward as an amendment, to have it as unlimited liability. If we take into account deletion of clause 21 and the deletion of the amounts referred to in subclause 21(1) in the two amendments, the bill would then refer to unlimited liability on the part of the operators for any damages incurred by their facility.

If there is unlimited liability, then oversight as to the amount of the liability is not required. The liability is set and continues forever as unlimited liability. It is up to the insurance company to understand the nature of unlimited liability. In the case of nuclear plants, there can be very different degrees of liability according to the locations of those plants.

That is the explanation and I hope that helps my colleague.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my colleague really touched on some very important points in his speech, one of them being that we simply cannot deal with the nuclear industry in this piecemeal fashion, and that is correct.

We have many problems with the liability limits in the bill. We did not have a context in which to put that. We did not have a sense of providing leadership in terms of identifying the true cost of the industry to the consumer. This is one point for someone who is interested in the comparison of directions in which we have to go.

If we continue to hold the liability for nuclear accidents above \$650 million with the Government of Canada, we are instituting a long term subsidy of the industry. We are not expressing the true costs of the industry in relationship to other potential new energy sources at which we may be looking.

Our amendment would simply create an unlimited liability for the nuclear industry, much as there is in many other countries. This would ensure that the cost to deal with it would be left with the industry. It would be reflected in the prices that the industry would charge for its product.

Is that not a better situation than continuing the liability of the government in subsidizing the industry?

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

### **EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 094**

#### **CONTENTS**

## **Tuesday, May 13, 2008**

### **Question No. 230--**

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regards to aboriginal people living on reserves: (a) what is the government's policy as it concerns the reserves in the Northwest Territories; (b) what is the policy as it concerns reserves in the remainder of Canada; and (c) what is the rationale for differences between the two, if any?

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, in response to a) In Canada, most Indian Act reserve lands are created by the federal government by order in council pursuant to the royal prerogative, exercised by the governor in council. The criteria for reserve creation are established by the additions to reserve, ATR, policy, which is applied throughout Canada whenever reserve land is created. In Canada's northern territories, while the ATR Policy applies for reserve creation, a 1955 cabinet directive established the procedures for reserving land. It provided for the reservation of lands by notation in the lands division records of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. Since then, with a few exceptions, it became the practice to establish "reserves by notation" for various federal departments, which were extensively used by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to make land available to first nations in the Northwest Territories.

Based on the 1955 cabinet directive, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has taken a general position that reserves under the Indian Act will not be contemplated for Yukon



and Northwest Territories first nations. The exception to this is when legal obligations arise from claims settlement agreements such as the treaty land entitlement settlement agreements, which require implementation by setting apart reserves under the Indian Act. When legal obligations exist reserves are created under the ATR policy. Indian Act reserves created in the northern territories since 1955 have all resulted from settlement agreements.

In response to b) There are no separate policies for the creation of reserves south and north of 60o. The ATR policy sets out three categories for the creation of Indian Act reserves: legal obligations, community additions, and new reserves/other. Currently, the majority of reserves are created in fulfillment of legal obligations. These are proposals that seek reserve status for land based on specific claim settlement agreements under treaty land entitlement, specific claims, court orders or legal reversions of former reserve land.

Community additions are proposals for the granting of reserve status to land that is within the service area of an existing reserve community. Once proposals are shown to be in this category, it is then necessary to establish that the land to be set apart as the reserve meets the site-specific criteria of the ATR policy, which include requirements that the land to be set apart for addition be within the "service area" of an existing reserve. Service area is defined as the geographic area "generally contiguous" to the existing reserve community within which existing on-reserve programs and community services can be delivered, infrastructure extended and installations shared, at little or no cost.

The new reserves/other category covers all proposals that are not legal obligations or community additions. The types of proposals covered under this category include, for instance, economic development, the establishment of new reserves resulting from provincial land offerings or new reserves resulting from unsold surrendered land not within the service area of an existing reserve community where, for example, the benefits would have to be matched against federal cost implications and other site-specific criteria.

There are currently two reserves in the Northwest Territories and they are Hay River Indian Reserve and Salt Plains Indian Reserve. A third reserve is being considered for creation and it is the Salt River Indian Reserve to fulfill the Salt River First Nation Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement of 2002.

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## **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 098**

**CONTENTS**

**Monday, May 26, 2008**

### **Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999**

The House resumed from May 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned the solid fuel aspect of biofuel. Quite clearly, in my territory, the Northwest Territories, right now, because of the enormous cost of fuel oil, we are moving toward using solid fuel, biological fuel, in many applications.

If this policy were broad enough and had the correct kinds of conditions attached, there would be some incentives for this type of proposal as well.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member in her speech referred to the NDP as opposing the biofuel bill, but we are speaking to an amendment that would send the bill back to the agriculture committee for more work on these very complex issues surrounding the production of ethanol, the type of feedstock and the type of direction.

Does my hon. colleague have no sense of the need for debate about the direction we take with this policy, when right across the world the United Nations and some of the European Union leaders are saying they need to change policy? Why do you think this policy—

....

## **Price of Petroleum Products**

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have a chance to respond to the hon. colleague from the Liberal Party. His analysis of what went wrong with the government early on is interesting. He talked about measures, after 13 years of Liberal governments, which were not that strong in dealing with the economy.

In the face of the rapidly increasing petroleum product costs this year, with the large, substantial profits being made, does the member think there is some room in the country for windfall taxes on profits, which are extremely high and going higher all the time, yet Canadians are stuck with the bill? With some kind of tax redress for the huge energy costs that we face, we could see a better situation for Canadians. We could see more dollars available for energy efficiency programs, about which the member talked. We could put that money back to work and make a difference for Canadians.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is not my pleasure to debate such a terrible issue for Canadians. I will be splitting my time with the member for Windsor West.

In my time in Parliament, I have spent a lot of time talking about energy issues, ways we can reduce costs for Canadians and ways we can move from our reliance on fossil fuels to renewable energy, many of the good things that are possible in this world.

However, I have yet to see this Parliament take hold of the energy issues in any meaningful way. In some respects, it goes back to the Liberal government of the past, since 2000, that worked very hard to establish a continental energy plan with the United States under the aegis of George Bush and Dick Cheney, and then it carried on with the Conservatives afterwards who were pleased to continue the work of a continental energy plan for Canada. We are now so linked into that in their minds that we cannot make the

kind of moves in Canada that could ultimately lead us to much lower energy costs and a better situation for Canadians as a whole.

Having said that and having laid that out as part of the problem that we have in Canada, I would like to move on to more of a national perspective, which is the energy problem. We are talking about the cost of petroleum products. I would first like to say that in the situation we are in, with the Conservatives standing and talking over and over again about the reduction in the GST, we are talking about very little. It is only 2¢ off the enormous cost increases that we have seen in the price of oil and gasoline. Those things will not be impacted by that 2¢ reduction in the GST.

Problems with natural gas have been around since 2003 when Natural Resources Canada indicated that we were in a position of running short of natural gas. The November 2007 outlook shows that we will have a serious problem by 2015 and that by 2020 we will have nothing left to export. We will be importing natural gas to heat our homes. This problem, however, seems to be of little concern to both the Liberals and the Conservatives in their times in office. We have yet to see the Department of Natural Resources, under either of those parties' direction, actually put some effort into understanding what is required for Canadians.

Probably what is required for Canadians is to go back to the old days where we insisted on maintaining large reserves of gas for Canadian use.

One of the great solutions that the Conservatives have thrown up, which we have debated in Parliament extensively, is biofuels. Biofuels, ethanol, will not reduce the cost of gasoline in our system. In fact, what we have seen over the last months in the ethanol business is that many plants that were setting up shop, because of the high cost of food, have realized that there is no profit left, even with the subsidies that are being applied to ethanol, to go into the business. We are seeing more and more ethanol plants across North America shutting down. The cost of feed is too high and the huge subsidy that is being offered up by the Americans is not enough to make up the difference. Therefore, biofuels will not solve the cost of energy in Canada.

Cellulosic ethanol, that kind of dream that we have, the dream of the future, of turning waste into ethanol and driving our vehicles around, is actually even more costly. Study after study has shown that we will not see a lowering of our energy bills through the use of cellulosic ethanol.

Where are we talking this country right now with energy? Are we just aimlessly stumbling along in a free market haze, in a free market ideological funk toward what most of the other countries in the world have given up on? Most countries have established national oil companies and have driven their energy policies by themselves, for themselves, while Canada has this ideological haze surrounding it. We are simply buying into the free market idea and moving ahead with it.

(2125)

When we talk about oil, oil is a product in Canada. As the minister said, oil is a product of the world and 86 million barrels a day are used. It cannot last forever. However, and members can check with Natural Resources Canada, the government has never done an assessment of the world oil supply for Canadian policy making. It has never looked at the situation of peak oil. Has the United States done it? Yes, it has. The U.S. military and Congress did it in the United States. What happens in Canada? There is no analysis.

I held a forum on Parliament Hill in February on the peak oil situation. What can we say about peak oil in the world? We can definitely say that peak oil production is very near. We should remember that. There is a lot of oil in this world but it is getting harder to find and harder to deliver. It takes larger amounts of capital, manpower and equipment to bring it forward. We are replacing oil as if we only had to stick a straw in the ground and oil would shoot out. Now we need to hunt for it and then put an enormous amount of effort into getting it out of the ground. We cannot replace the conventional oil in the world with unconventional oil fast enough anymore. Therefore, we are at a point of peak oil production.

Do members know what Exxon's biggest investment was in the last couple of years? It invested \$30 billion into buying its own shares back off the public market because it

realized that cheap oil that had already been found was probably the best way to make a profit. Shell did the same thing.

The recognition of the state of the world oil industry is something we must take very seriously. Yes, the speculative nature of the free market system has driven up the price of oil very rapidly in the last year and we are all gagging on it, but in reality we will be out of cheap oil and we will be stuck with very expensive oil products in the future.

For the people I represent in northern Canada, in the Northwest Territories, this year we will see for our consumer and government expenditures a 10% increase put toward oil and petroleum products. That means that out of our whole economy we will lose 10% next year; 10% of the expenditures for governments, businesses, employees. Everyone will suffer. The burden that northern Canada bears because we have not made the progress on changing is enormous.

As well, my government in the Northwest Territories is trying to change. It is investing in solid bioenergy. It is converting buildings to biofuels and that is working. It is talking about large hydroelectric projects. It is talking about things that it can do.

This country needs to develop a very strong program that will talk about energy and provide people across the country with the answers. That is what this party is after.

We worked very hard on Bill C-30. There is a wonderful opportunity in Bill C-30 to develop a national retrofit program using the cap and trade system that was designed and supported by the Liberals and the Bloc. This is the type of thing we need in Canada: good sensible work and good sensible policies supported by all of us that we can move ahead with. We tried to do that with Bill C-30 and we were fairly successful. Why can the government not understand that we need those things in this country?

(2130)

I know my time is running short, but this debate is very important to Canadians and I hope that we all take this very seriously.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, competition is failing us in Canada on energy issues because energy, by and large, is run by the international market, by very large companies that set their price as the market will bear within the context of the larger world price.

With either of the approaches that the other parties have, the chances we have of really accomplishing something with the Competition Act are unlikely. If we put our hope in possibly changing the price at the gas pump, that might work to some extent, but it still leaves us short of the larger problem which is that energy prices are escalating, that the world supply is being chased by more customers, and we need to make a stronger effort to reduce energy use.

The Japanese economy is smiling because incredible energy efficiency work has been done there over the last 20 years. The price of oil has gone up, yet their products are now much more competitive in the world marketplace because they depend less on fossil fuels.

....

# EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 101

## CONTENTS

### Thursday, May 29, 2008

#### Nuclear Liability and Compensation Act

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, An Act respecting civil liability and compensation for damage in case of a nuclear incident, be read the third time, and of the motion that this question be now put.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from the Bloc for his presentation. I have worked with him over the past two years and I know his great concern about creating an environment and an economy where we can move to a green future. It is certainly within the context of this debate. I know his concerns around the expansion of the nuclear industry. He spoke to the need to bring these new energy forms onto a common playing field. That is something I agree with as well.

It is one of the reasons we have put forward so many amendments to this bill, to try to get to a point where we could have a bill that truly represents the real costs of nuclear energy. Across the world, many other countries are taking a different tone about the level of liability that needs to be held by the industry. In Germany, for instance, there is unlimited liability. In the United States, the liability limit is some \$10 billion.

Why does my honourable colleague support this bill even though it does not really bring the nuclear industry to a level playing field in terms of its own responsibility for the liability that may ensue from any kind of accident occurring within a plant?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, in reference to my previous question to the hon. member, I want to go back to that because he stated that the insurance companies would not be able to put forward the type of coverage that would be required for the industry if they had a larger amount than \$650 million. In the United States, the Americans extend the coverage to almost \$10 billion. Certainly, many of the reactors in Canada are located in areas that are adjacent to cities, much like the United States.

The position of the industry has been that the insurance companies are not willing to cover the larger amount. How can we be sure? How do the companies that run the reactors in the United States achieve this level of liability insurance within their country? Why is it so that we as Canadians in our country cannot achieve the same thing through our insurance companies?

....

#### Nuclear Liability Compensation Act

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, An Act respecting civil liability and compensation for damage in case of a nuclear incident, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to some of the issues that my hon. colleague brought up. We were concerned with many of them. We put forward amendments, both at committee and in the House, over the time we dealt with the bill, which is a considerable length of time. One of them is the reinsurance provisions.

The hon. member alluded to the reinsurance provisions within the bill and said that the insurance companies could reach out to other insurance companies. If they felt they could not take this risk on themselves, they could reinsure with other insurance companies.

However, in the bill the federal government is empowered to be the reinsurer of the nuclear facilities. If they are unable to accomplish the insurance with the insurance company, the government can step in and become the reinsurer. In other words, it can take over the liability of the insurance for the particular facility. We had a lot of trouble with this clause. We did not see this as setting up the nuclear industry as separate, distinct and on its own two feet. We saw this as the government would be brought into insuring high-risk nuclear facilities.

How does this match up to understanding that the industry will work in an unsubsidized, unsupported manner from the government? How will this phase, which we tried to eliminate, prevent government from holding the liability for the nuclear plants that are not up to the standards that regular insurers would cover?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to subclause 26(1) in the bill. It states:

The Minister may enter into an agreement with an approved insurer under which Her Majesty in right of Canada reinsures some or all of the risk assumed by the insurer under insurance referred to in subsection 24(1).

Subclause 26(2) states:

The risks that may be reinsured are those that, in the Minister's opinion, would not be assumed by an approved insurer without the agreement or those that are prescribed by regulation.

Subclause 26(3) states:

The reinsurance agreement may provide for the payment of premiums to Her Majesty in right of Canada.

Quite clearly, we see that the government then becomes the reinsurer. It is collecting the premiums. It is assuming the risk. This is not a question of a guarantee. This is a question of the government actually providing the services of the private sector in insurance.

We tried to remove this from the bill so we would have a more level playing field for nuclear energy, where nuclear energy had to stand on its own two feet. Does the member not think this should be excised from the bill?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, once again I rise to speak to Bill C-5, the nuclear liability act. It is an act that has been rattling around the House of Commons for the better part of a year and, in that year, our position has not really altered all that much on the bill.

Yes, we recognize the need to increase the liability limits for nuclear power, very much so. We know that the liability limit that was in place before is simply not enough. However, the \$650 million is a number that we have not been able to accept as a limit to the liability within the system and we have talked about that to a great degree.

I will not get into that right now because it is only part of the bill. We put forward many amendments on numerous other subjects, which I will get into as I go along, but they show that this bill, in reality, limits liability in more than one way. It limits liability and

continues a Canadian practice of ignoring the impacts of nuclear accidents in the country, the impacts on workers in the uranium mining industry over many years and the impacts on our soldiers when they were put in harm's way in the face of nuclear explosions in the 1950s and 1960s.

There has been a consistent pattern over many years of downplaying the impacts of nuclear problems in the country. At the same time, contrary to what many of my colleagues have said, the nuclear industry is one that has never really made its way. In the half century that it has been a big part of the energy system in Canada, it has relied consistently on subsidies from government. It is an industry that has been plagued with overruns. We see this once again with the cancellation of the MAPLE reactor, a simple, small nuclear reactor going in place way over budget, to the point where we have now given up on it.

In the nuclear industry we have in place right now, we are looking at massive retrofits to existing plants at huge costs that are continuing to escalate as we move along. When we think of the nuclear industry, we are not thinking of an industry that has a great track record of performance in providing cheap energy for people across this country, and that is a reality. Therefore, when we talk about setting up a nuclear liability act to put things on a level playing field, we should take that seriously and we should look at how we are doing it.

At the same time, we should look at our record of dealing with people who have been exposed to nuclear radiation in this country in the past and ask if we are doing enough in this bill to protect them. To that end, I will go through some of the amendments that we proposed within the bill, taking away from the liability amount and speaking to some other items.

We proposed a number of amendments, such as to clause 24 which talks about alternate financial security that companies can put up in place of insurance under this bill. Up to 50% can be provided in alternative financial security. Once again, it is in the hands of the minister to deem correct the conditions by which the security is put up. Therefore, the minister has a great deal of latitude to choose what the financial security is for the nuclear plant. It does not all have to be insurance. Fifty per cent can be alternative security.

What is wrong with that? If there is an accident, the victims need to wait for the liquidation of the financial security in order to get compensation. The government, which puts up 20% of the funds for compensation, is on the hook at the very beginning with the money that it puts forward to the people who are seeking compensation out of the system.

(1720)

We have problems with that because it clearly takes away from the notion that we would get away from government supporting the industry and the industry would stand on its own two feet through the insurance companies.

Then we could go to subclause 30(1), which states:

An action or claim must be brought

(a) in the case of an action or a claim for loss of life,

(i) within three years after the day on which the person died...

It does not talk about the survivors. The wage earner dies in an industrial accident at a nuclear site and the survivors have three years to effect that claim. Is that fair to the survivors? Perhaps the industrial worker simply gets cancer 10 years after exposure to the accident in the plant and dies. Does that mean his survivors do not get compensation?

Subclause 30(2) states:

No action or claim may be brought

(a) in relation to bodily injury, after 30 years from the day on which occurred the nuclear incident to which the action or claim relates...

Thirty years is not enough. We see that with the soldiers who were exposed to the nuclear weapons in the fifties. They are coming back now today with claims, long after 30

years, because it has shown up in their system. Once again, this is limiting the liability and it is limiting the ability for compensation to be paid.

In any other case, it is after 10 years from the day on which the nuclear accident occurred. If it is not bodily injury, if it is contamination of a site, if it is the fact that someone uses contaminated material from a site to perhaps build another site somewhere, or to use it in the building of residences, which has been a very common occurrence right across the country, and I can point to Uranium City where that happened, the liability and the ability to be compensated for mistakes that have been made is gone after 10 years. Once again, it is the limitations.

Then we could go to clause 32. A person who started off suing the operator, but after a certain period of time had not seen action, would have to start all over again. People who are suffering from things which are very difficult to determine or may take years to determine, such as cancer or radiation sickness, will have great difficulty going through multiple processes to get fair compensation.

This clause would allow a nuclear operator to delay having to pay compensation by throwing legal roadblocks in place. Wait long enough and working Canadians will suffer and compensation for the people who look for it will be unavailable.

Once again, the bill creates a situation where the claimants are at a greater risk than the company.

Clause 34 states that the maximum amount paid may not exceed 20% of the difference between the totals set out and total amounts paid by the operators. Therefore, interim compensation for people who are previously ill can only amount perhaps to 20% of what they require to cover their compensated loss. Once again, this speaks to favouring the company over the people who may be involved in the claims.

We also had a lot of trouble with clause 47. The tribunal, which has been set up to review these things, may refuse to hear any claim referred to it if it considers them to be frivolous or vexatious. This is patently unfair under the rules of our courts. Federal courts can only reject an action if a person has persistently instituted vexatious proceedings or has conducted a proceeding in a vexatious manner and only with the consent of the Attorney General of Canada. A tribunal will simply be able to say to a victim looking for compensation that the claim is vexatious, that it does not have deal with it. Where is this serving Canadians when it comes to establishing compensation?

Once again, this is the part of the bill with which we have a great deal of difficulty. I guess my colleagues in the other parties seem to be quite comfortable with it.

(1725)

Subsection 50(2) states:

The Tribunal may, in order to process claims expeditiously, establish classes of claims that may be determined by a claims officer without an oral hearing and designate as a claims officer anyone it considers qualified.

A claims officers circumvents accountability, creating an easy opportunity for the system to be corrupted. A claims officer is used when small amounts are contemplated. When a tribunal is created, it means the damage from a nuclear incident is massive on a scale that we could tie with Three Mile Island, or Windscale or something of that nature. Therefore, where does this sit for claims officers?

Subclause 63(1) states:

If a regulation made under paragraph 68(b) respecting pro rata payments or establishing maximum limits is amended, the Tribunal shall inform the Minister of any change to applicable reductions that is to the advantage of any claimant who was not fully compensated in accordance with the previous regulation.

These are simply weasel words. This is something that we could not support because it opens up too many opportunities for the situation to be misused.

Clause 65 talks about the fines that could be levied on somebody who did not achieve the proper liability insurance. Subclause 65(2) states:

No operator is to be found guilty of the offence if it is established that the operator exercised due diligence to prevent the commission of the offence.

In other words, if somebody tried to get insurance and did not get it, that would be okay. If a company were unable to get insurance, if the previous insurance company,



which had agreed to the risks, determined those risks were getting greater and chose not to reinsure with that company, it would be okay because it had tried.

That is not the kind of legislation we like to see. We want companies to have insurance, no exceptions. If they want to run their plant, they need to have all the paperwork in place. What is wrong with that, in a Canadian context?

I see we are pretty well finished now, so I will leave the rest for later. I am sure the debate will continue.

....

## **Climate Change Accountability Act**

The House resumed from May 12 consideration of Bill C-377, An Act to ensure Canada assumes its responsibilities in preventing dangerous climate change, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

....

### **Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to speak to Bill C-377, a bill that would help Canada and would make Canada assume its responsibilities in preventing dangerous climate change gas emissions.

Over the last day and a half, I had the opportunity to travel to Greenland on the issue of northern sovereignty. While I was there with the Minister of Natural Resources, I had the opportunity to travel to the Greenland ice cap, which is an amazing place. It is a huge expanse of ice that has been in place for hundreds of thousands of years. There is an enormous volume of moisture tied up in the ice cap, but it is quite clearly under severe strain right now.

The scientists we met with on the ice cap talked to us about the conditions they are seeing within this massive and seemingly eternal landscape of ice that is thousands of metres thick and is covering a whole continent. However, right now it is moving. The movement within the ice is accelerating.

The rate of loss of the ice cap is accelerating as well. It accelerated over the past decade to a point where it had between 250 and 300 cubic kilometres of ice loss each year. Last season, it achieved 500 cubic kilometres of ice loss. That is a massive increase.

Any discussion of northern sovereignty, of course, links to climate change. We had the opportunity to hear presentations on climate change from very respected climatologists in large research institutions. They said that the situation right now with the Arctic ice is likely to mean that if we have another warm summer this year, they will be able to sail a boat across the North Pole, from Norway through to Russia.

That is an extraordinary statement. It may not come to pass. We may have a cooler summer. However, the direction that our climate is taking is extremely disturbing. We must recognize that. As Canadians, we have a tremendous responsibility to lead ourselves and the rest of the world toward solutions, toward mitigation as well as reducing our impact.

This bill sets out the kinds of goals that are required to achieve what the scientists have said is a sufficient reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for the world by 2050. Setting out the goals for Canada to achieve those things is extremely important. It is part of what we have to do here.

I am dedicated to this. I will dedicate the rest of my life to working to achieve the kinds of things we have to do in Canada to preserve our life and the chance for our children and grandchildren to continue to prosper. That is certainly a worthwhile goal and I have total faith that this country can do that. It can move ahead in a fashion that can achieve our goals in this way. I do not see why we cannot.

I had an opportunity to talk to the Danes. I like the Danes. The Danish minister of energy said to me last year that if we want to accomplish something on climate change and energy, we need to build a non-political consensus within our Parliament of the directions we have to take. That is so important.

(1755)

The relentless sniping over climate change that we have seen in this last two years really does not accomplish all that much. However, we did accomplish one thing on climate change already. When we sent the clean air act to a special committee, we got a majority in Parliament to agree on the directions we should take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We got a majority in Parliament to agree to the mechanisms that we should use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

What I heard from the members of the other party who did not quite agree with us at the time is that they were pretty well on side with most of those mechanisms anyhow. We said in the clean air act that we wanted to put a cap on emissions, put a price on carbon, and create a massive retrofit program for this country so the first step we would take would be to reduce people's use of energy. We would see rapid and substantial decreases in greenhouse gas emissions. We would have a mechanism to fund this and these things would come to pass.

We did that work. The bill is sitting there, waiting to come back to Parliament, waiting to spring into life and to provide that direction to this country. We have done that work and we need to see that kind of plan in place.

Sometimes we find that other parties change in regard to that. They start to talk about other ideas like they are picking fruit from a tree. Here is a different fruit, they say, let us try that one. What really is required is a consensus on action. We worked on that for a long time.

I would say to the Liberal Party members that they should remember what they worked on in this Parliament. They should remember the effort they put into this, the good ideas they put forward and that we supported, and the good ideas that they have accepted from us. When they move forward with anything on this issue, they should remember that.

We need consensus and we need to build from consensus in the government and in this country to accomplish these rather difficult paths that we have ahead of us. However, if we accomplish them, we will do a major and wonderful thing for the world, for our own society and for our children and grandchildren.

Bill C-377 is setting out the goals. It is giving us a framework with which to analyze the goals and make sure that we are on track. It is a planning document of the first order. It is an opportunity to layer in the mechanisms, to understand how they work and to ensure they are meeting the targets as we move along.

Why would we not have a process like this, a process that will take the politics out of it and will mean that we can move ahead very carefully?

I appreciate your gesture, Mr. Speaker. As always in the House, the work that the Speakers do to keep us on track is great. I also appreciate the fact, Mr. Speaker, that you shared that green chair with one of my colleagues, who I am sure will always relish the memory of that opportunity.

To get back to the subject at hand, how can we continue to work on this together? We can continue by passing this legislation. The bill is a planning document. It allows us all to agree on the process that we will follow. It is a document that gives us the flexibility to look at how we are making decisions and to ensure that those decisions are moving us in the right direction. By its nature, it is a non-partisan document.

If we all support this, we can move ahead. We can make a difference in this country. We can make this Parliament sing a different tune. We can say, "Here is the reality of what we are dealing with in this world and in this country, so let us make it work together". Let us make a better place for all of us. Let us put aside the politics on this particular issue for a second, a day, a week, a month, a year, and let us move ahead with this for the good of Canadians.

....

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# 39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 102

CONTENTS

**Friday, May 30, 2008**

## **Budget Implementation Act, 2008**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the speech by my colleague across the way. He may have touched, in some ways, on why the Conservatives included the immigration business in the budget.

The budget seems to deal dishonestly with figures. It also deals dishonestly with the figures when it talks about the impact on immigration that it will achieve with this particular set of amendments.

Does the hon. member not agree that we need decisive action to reduce the wait list, not this reconfiguration of the rules to change the basic nature of our immigration system?

....

## **The Arctic**

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, as an observer to the recent international conference on the Arctic Ocean held in Greenland, I was pleased to hear that other Arctic nations have the same view that the NDP has on how to protect the Arctic.

The nations at the conference agreed that the best way to deal with the question of Arctic sovereignty is through cooperation, diplomacy and the international legal system and not through military muscle. This is the same position the NDP has long taken on this issue.

It is unfortunate the Conservatives have chosen the route of military force to deal with Arctic sovereignty. The Conservatives plan to build more military bases and buy a fleet of ineffective slush breakers. Just like their position on climate change, the Conservatives' policy on the Arctic is out of step with the rest of the world.

We in the NDP, and now our Arctic neighbours, believe that the best way to protect the Arctic is through support for civilian enforcement of our laws, diplomacy and improving the lives of northern Canadians.

There is a role for the military in Canada's north through activities like the Canadian Rangers and search and rescue, a need that the Conservatives--

(1105)

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**The Deputy Speaker:**

The hon. member for Fundy Royal.

\* \* \*

....

## The Environment

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister told a well-heeled audience in London, England that his government would fight climate change by an increased use of nuclear power. In his speech, the Prime Minister tried to claim that under his watch Canada would become a clean energy superpower.

Nuclear energy is not clean or green. Nuclear waste remains lethal for thousands of years and no solution has been found to safely deal with this waste. Without a safe solution for toxic waste, how can the Prime Minister call nuclear energy clean and green?

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**Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, we certainly will not interfere with the provinces' decisions on their energy mix, but Canada is an emerging energy superpower and we are committed to ensuring it becomes a clean energy superpower.

In our government, we have focused on the priorities to really make a difference in these areas, including things like cleaning up conventional energy, adding clean renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency, and nuclear energy is certainly one of the options in that mix.

\* \* \*

....

## Budget Implementation Act, 2008

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact

provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, as reported without amendment from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the member is a very strong advocate for his constituency. In a poll of all the members in the House this year, he was recognized as the best constituency MP the House has to offer. That is a wonderful achievement on his part and it speaks volumes about what he tries to do in the House for his constituents.

I too am taken aback by the continued attack by the Conservatives and Liberals toward the membership of the New Democratic Party on the basis of our ability to achieve. Our ability to achieve is large in the House. I have been here for two years and I am been most impressed with the record of the New Democratic Party in making a difference for Canadians. Every day we try to do that.

How should we have handled the bill? How would that have given a better—

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, certainly we have a very unified position in this party about this bill and about the need to remove these onerous provisions from it.

I want to speak about the backlog of applicants. Is it the reality that there is no backlog for student visas, temporary resident visas and temporary foreign workers visas in Canada? Will Bill C-50 take away the rights of these applicants to be given a visa even when they meet all the qualifications?

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak to Bill C-50, the budget implementation act, and the amendments we put forward to try to bring some rationale to the situation and the future of immigration in this country.

I come from a part of the country which in the past may not have been the prime destination for immigrants to Canada, but over the last number of years that has changed quite dramatically. Immigrants are coming to communities throughout the Northwest Territories. In many cases they face completely different living and climatic conditions. They work really hard to integrate themselves into Canada and into the burgeoning economy in the Northwest Territories. We are grateful that people are coming to contribute to our economy, to live in the north, to work and to support the development of our territory. That is a great thing. In Yellowknife right now there are 27 different ethnic groups. Clearly this is a result of this immigration movement.

It is difficult for people as they have to fight their way through the process to get into the country. We seem to have created a system in which immigrants have to spend much of their time and energy on paperwork, rather than focusing on their goals as immigrants and accomplishing things, like reuniting their families in this country.

My constituency office handles many cases every year. Many of those cases reference the particular hardships that individuals have experienced in establishing their lives in Canada because they cannot get through the system. They cannot accomplish their goals within the system in a reasonable time. The bureaucratic structures are not adequate to give them the support they need to make proper representations in the immigration system. In many cases that leads them to the member of Parliament's office for assistance.

In the Northwest Territories there is only one immigration officer and that person has other duties to fulfill in terms of enforcing other parts of the act. That person cannot act

only as a guide to the immigrants within the country who are trying to move forward with their lives. We suffer from a huge shortage of manpower required to make the system work better. That is the case in my riding where we have a total of 43,000 people. Community groups do their best to help out with the situation. We have a structure which I think in some ways is more amenable to supporting individuals, but the fact that this is the situation in my riding suggests to me that it is even more of a problem elsewhere in the country.

(1300)

Therefore, when we want to propose changes to the Immigration Act, I think it is incumbent upon everyone to get all the evidence. This process that the Conservative Party has foisted on the House to deal with immigration is simply not correct or appropriate for making that happen. It is a back door approach to making changes.

It was outed very early once the bill came forward because of course these things are scrutinized fairly closely. It did not work quite the way the Conservatives wanted, but the opportunities to then work on this legislation were sorely limited because it was handled in this particular fashion.

The changes to the act that in many cases we find most repugnant as Canadians are that we are taking away the democratic nature of the system as it exists now. We are not trying to improve the efficiency of the system or properly build up the resources needed to make the system work.

As well, we are not dealing with the problems we have in many of our embassies in other countries. Rather than utilizing Canadians who are used to dealing with our system in the same democratic and useful fashion, we find that in many cases we are utilizing nationals from the countries where the embassies are located. In my time as a member of Parliament, that has noticeably impacted on the ability of immigrants to acquire visas and move forward in a smooth fashion through the many hoops and stumbling blocks that exist for people who are applying for a visa or trying to be reunited with their families.

These problems are not going to be solved by this bill, because it is going in the wrong direction. At the same time, when we stand to ask for these issues to be removed from this bill, we are by no means suggesting that there is nothing wrong with the Immigration Act. It is just that what is being proposed here does not fit the Canadian model. It does not address the resource issues that are quite clearly dominating many of the problems and leading to these huge backlogs in the system.

The Conservatives, in their few years here, have not been able to even make a dent in that backlog. In fact, the backlog has gotten larger.

Their solution, especially the idea that there will be yearly quotas and at the end of the year all the applications that are not part of the quota will be rejected, is a really bad thing. It will discourage people from coming to this country. It will discourage people from making applications. There will be constant intrigue in the department in regard to trying to find out where these different classifications or directions are going to go.

All of this is going to lead to a complete breakdown in the system and take us away from the values that Canadians have so much pride in. In fact, idealistically, we send our armed forces around the world to try to uphold those values in other countries.

What this bill is doing is creating an arbitrary, authoritarian potential within the department, although it does not necessarily have to be that way. We could argue that the minister could be a most altruistic and wonderful individual who would not use the difference between "may" and "shall" in many of these points to discriminate against applicants. However, human nature being what it is, I think we have found in Canada that the best way to avoid discrimination and maintain a democratic system is to have rules that match up to that.

(1305)

It is a phenomenon that I see so much in Canada: we do not jump queues in this country. We take our time. We fill the time we have available to us--

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, we spoke endlessly in the fall on our feelings about the changes in the tax system that were initiated in that mini budget in November. We are not in favour of them, especially the corporate tax cuts that were made. They were wrong-headed and wrongly directed, because 50% of the corporate profits in this country are made either by the banks or by the oil companies. We saw a huge infusion to that group.

What has happened in the last three months in this country is quite serious. Now that the figures have come out, we see that we have a 0.3% drop in the GDP, but at the same time we have seen a huge increase in the price of resources in the resource industries. We know that our gross domestic product has been inflated by the very high prices of oil and gas, fertilizer and all manner of resources. At the same time, we are seeing a drop in the total gross domestic product.

I would say that the situation is even more severe on that point. The only expansion in our economy is in areas where the resources are being exploited. In the areas where they are not, we are obviously underachieving.

The tax breaks have not interested a lot of people in the manufacturing sector because that is not what they need. They need strategic investment. They need incentives to do the right things. They need money to retool. Those are the sorts of things that industry really requires and that it did not get from the Conservative government.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

Mr. Speaker, I would say the fault lies with the whole Conservative caucus in not standing up for their democratic rights in forming government. They are allowing this situation to continue, whether or not it is through their leadership. We have a mass of MPs here who could be speaking out on it and they do not, so it is their problem, not just the Prime Minister's problem.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, this seems to be a rather odd way of conducting business here, but I really do want to respond.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

I want to ask the member a question on his speech. Rather than dealing with budget issues, most of his speech was a sort of attack on what he perceived I said. You can check the record, Mr. Speaker. I think *Hansard* will show that the question was asked of me about the nature of the Conservative government's control from the top down. I said that if that is the problem, then the solution should lie with all of the Conservative caucus. To me, that is part of the democratic process.

The conduct of a particular political party is not simply on the basis of the leadership. It is on the basis of every individual member within it. If the hon. member speaks up on these issues, then that is commendable. Perhaps the hon. member wants to speak up now on what he thinks about the nature of democracy in Parliament.

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# **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 104**

**CONTENTS**

**Tuesday, June 3, 2008**

**Budget Implementation Act, 2008**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

....

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his dissertation on Bill C-50. It is certainly one that we have spoken to many times in the past in the House.

When we look at the state of economy that we have heard coming forward in the last report on the gross domestic product, for instance, which has slipped by 0.3% over the last three months, even at a time when our resource profits and the huge increase in the price of oil and natural gas have occurred in the country, one would think that these types of activities in the economy would by themselves create a positive nature in the gross domestic product. However, we are seeing a drop.

Quite clearly, the losers are losing and the winners are winning very strongly with this budget. Where is the fairness in the budget, in the corporate sector at least, where so many companies that are trying so hard now to remain afloat are having such great difficulty?

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# **39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION**

**EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 107**

**CONTENTS**

**Friday, June 6, 2008**



# The Environment

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are fast-tracking the Kearl tar sands project. The government assessment regime will not consider other ongoing or upcoming projects. Imperial Oil is expecting its water permit today and yet there are no measures to address the impact on the health of first nations and northerners, no cap on absolute gas emissions and no protection of threatened wildlife species.

Will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans refuse to issue this final permit until these conditions are met?

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**Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, the minister answered this question yesterday. As he pointed out, every environmental process and every regulation is being followed. The toughest standards are being set. Our environment minister has set some of the toughest standards on this planet and those are going to be met.

I reassure the House that this project is going to meet every one of those standards and our government is committed to protecting the environment as this project goes ahead.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are handing out a blank cheque to the executives at American-owned Exxon for a \$500 billion resource grab.

We all know Exxon has such a clean and unimpeachable record on the environment. Kearl will spew the same gas emissions that 800,000 new cars would over 50 years. Giving Yankee companies a break at the expense of Canada's environment will not stop there.

Could the government confirm that it is green lighting new nuclear plants in Alberta to enable energy exports to the United States?

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**Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, the member is asking a number of questions there, but I will talk about the Kearl project.

There has been no final decision as to whether the Department of Fisheries and Oceans will issue Imperial Oil the authorization under the Fisheries Act for this project. Due process is being followed. It is not appropriate to speculate about that final decision, but the bottom line is that this project, like every other project, is going to have to meet the tough standards for the oil sands projects under our "Turning the corner" plan, which aims to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by an absolute 20% by 2020.

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## Question No. 254--

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regard to the government's contracting process: (a) what process was used to award a contract from Health Canada to Richard Bargery (contract number 4500173728) on November 12, 2007; (b) if other bids were received, who were they from and what were the amounts bid; and (c) in detail, what services is Mr. Bargery providing to the government?

**Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, in response to a) In the fall of 2007, Health Canada notified the pharmacy associations of NWT and Yukon of our intent to begin negotiations regarding fee arrangements. The government of Nunavut was also informed that separate negotiations with Nunavut and Beaufort Delta area pharmacists would begin in late fall or January.

Both negotiations were considered extremely sensitive as there were concerns that if negotiations failed, pharmacies in either region, could withdraw from Health Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefit Program, leaving First Nations and Inuit clients in those areas unable to obtain their medications in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, the person scheduled to lead these negotiations for Health Canada unexpectedly withdrew the services in October – just weeks prior to the scheduled start of the negotiations. This created an immediate, and urgent, need for Health Canada to find a replacement negotiator.

It was imperative to find someone with excellent negotiating skills and knowledge of health issues, as well as someone with significant experience and understanding of northern issues and realities. In addition, it was essential to find someone with established relationships with stakeholders and a strong understanding of the territorial environments.

Health Canada identified and approached three qualified candidates. Two of the three qualified candidates informed Health Canada that they were unavailable to take on such a contract. The third candidate, Mr. Richard Bargery, was available to begin the work in the required time frame.

He also met all of Health Canada's qualifications. He is a former deputy minister within the government of the Northwest Territories; has worked with officials of the government of Nunavut at the most senior levels; has performed the role of lead negotiator for a wide array of program areas and strategic initiatives; and has strong and established relationships within territorial governments and with key First Nations and Inuit partners.

Thus, based on his availability and the fact he met Health Canada's specific criteria for qualifications and experience, a decision was made to offer Mr. Bargery a contract.

In response to b) As a sole source process was undertaken to award this contract, no other bids were received

In response to c) Mr. Bargery is responsible for representing Health Canada at two negotiating tables: one with the NWT and Yukon Pharmacy Association, and one with the Nunavut and Beaufort-Delta pharmacy providers. Since the beginning of his contract, he has participated in more than 10 formal and informal meetings with these two groups. For cost efficiency, the majority of these meetings are conducted by telephone or video-conference, however on three occasions face to face meetings have been held. Each meeting requires significant preparation including consultations with Health Canada and extensive reviews and analysis of data, correspondence and other documentation.

The contractor is also responsible for reviewing and replying to proposals and correspondence developed by these groups. The contractor is required to liaise with first nations and Inuit organizations. While this work is especially important in Nunavut and the Beaufort-Delta region, where organizations have a financial stake in the local pharmacies, first nations and Inuit organizations across the territories are all very interested in the negotiations, as they could have a direct impact on their memberships. This work consists of additional meetings, as well as drafting correspondence to the organizations.

Finally, the contractor is responsible for providing ongoing briefings to senior management teams at Health Canada about the status and directions of the negotiations.

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## **Income Tax Act**

The House resumed from April 7 consideration of Bill C-207, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (tax credit for new graduates working in designated regions), as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand and speak to Bill C-207, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (tax credit for new graduates working in designated regions). The bill would give each graduate who settles in a designated region a credit equal to 40% of the individual's salary, up to \$8,000. This would encourage new graduates to settle in designated regions.

This is an important concept but it only goes so far in the whole context of what is happening in the northern regions of Canada. I also have full sympathy for northern students because almost all of them must travel to institutions in different cities to get a degree in a particular subject. In my own riding in the Northwest Territories, the government invests heavily in community colleges, to the point where students can now stay in the Northwest Territories and get a degree in education or in nursing, but that is about it.

In order for students in a designated region to get the education they want, they need to travel. The expenses are greater for them at the beginning. They also do not have the luxury of living at home when they are going to school. Once again the burden is greater on students from the far reaches of our country in achieving the education they need. These things all add up and make it very difficult for students.

When I went to school, our federal government at that time--

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**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** That was a long time ago and I am not ashamed of that. I think more than education, one needs wisdom to be in this House.

However, at that time we were fully covered for post-secondary education. People in northern regions falling under the federal government's auspices had complete coverage for education. That has eroded over the years. Right now, even within my territory, there are some opportunities. If graduates return to the Northwest Territories they have the opportunity to be forgiven some of the student loans they may have taken out to achieve their degree.

Quite clearly, I am supportive of giving more opportunities to northern students to achieve an education first, and then second, to return to the north and participate in the economy there. The economy is in difficult shape. Right across northern Canada we are facing extreme increases in our cost of living this year. This has been going on actually for a number of years. We are at a point now in the Northwest Territories, where our gross domestic product rose 13% last year, we had a 1% decline in our workforce.

People simply cannot afford to live in northern regions any more. Therefore, the concept that we would make it easier for students to move back to the north and live is a good one but it does not go as far as what we need to do within the tax structure of the country to promote living in the north. We saw the Conservatives make a perfunctory gesture toward that with the increase in the northern resident tax deduction by 10%. We were asking for 50% but they did not accomplish that.

However, hopefully, now that the concept has been revitalized in this Parliament and people see what the situation is, the government will come up with a better solution next time and actually get the job done right.

When it comes to the cost of living, we are in a crisis right across northern Canada. Not only do we need to, by our nature, by our geography and by our climate, consume much more in fossil fuels than most other Canadians, we also pay extraordinary prices for it, which really hurts and will hurt even more.

(1400)

Right now in the Northwest Territories, in order to have all the services, transportation and all the things that are required, it turns out that the average family unit, within the economy, consumes over 10,000 litres a year in fuel. Prices have doubled in the last year. We are going to see an enormous crisis in the ability of people to live and work in the north. We need answers right now. We need answers that can work for people.

As well as being a northern region, as well as having high costs, we are also a driver of the Canadian economy. We are not the laggards. We are not the people who are not contributing to the development of the Canadian economy. On the contrary, our communities are making massive contributions in terms of national resource extraction and in many other areas that are very beneficial to this country.

We need support for northerners. We need support for students. We need to put money into human resources across the north. We need to make it possible for young people to enjoy a decent life in northern communities so that they will return to their homes and take up the responsibility of citizenship within their region, rather than end up in a city where there is not that measure of cultural understanding or that opportunity to build their own future in their own part of the world.

I would love to support this bill, but some of the things in the bill are troublesome. One thing is the designated region definition. In examining the Regional Development Incentives Act, we do not see clearly that this lines up for the whole of northern Canada, or for all the isolated and remote areas across the country. Some of them are not that far north. There are certainly some rural and remote areas in many of the provinces. We need a strong definition of what this rural and remote policy to encourage students is and how it is to be put into place. That would certainly help.

There is no doubt that what is being proposed here is useful, but is it enough? I have trouble seeing that it is enough. Clearly, with what is happening in the northern economies across Canada we need a massive opportunity to promote living in the north.

In a kind of perverse way, with the consumption taxes that are in place, and the taxes on fuels, and everything we are doing in Canada, an extra tax burden is put on northerners across the country. In Paulatuk, Northwest Territories a gallon of bleach costs \$30, but in Ottawa it costs \$2. That means the consumption tax is hitting the consumer in Paulatuk harder than it is hitting the consumer in Ottawa.

In many ways northerners contribute quite a bit to the tax system and they should be recognized for that as well when consumption taxes are put on. The northern mayors in British Columbia were outraged at the idea of a carbon tax because, of course, northerners have to consume more, things cost more and they pay higher taxes. When we offer up some incentives in the tax system, we are really trying to equalize what is going on there.

I will finish my comments there.

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