

**Mr. Knight:** I ask the Conservative members in this minority parliament to stop this kind of bill. They call on us to support what they and the Liberal minority are going to support. In this position of balance of power they are going to wield the power to give two individuals authority over their people and appoint them to the other place, rather than as responsible elected representatives from the northern areas.

In my view, in this decade this northern area will become the focal point of almost all the political, economic and social controversy that there will be in this chamber. This will develop because of the potential mineral wealth and resource development in the area. With that in mind, and having in mind the interest of the people who live there, we cannot allow ourselves to be placed in the position where we appoint people who are not responsible to those who live in these areas to look after their interests. I say that in the next decade our northern area will be of such significance that in this chamber the hon. member for Yukon and the hon. member for Northwest Territories, or whoever may come after them, may well hear more debate in respect of their areas of the country than we today hear about boxcars. I believe that is the kind of discussion this nation will have. What the right hon. member for Prince Albert spoke of as a vision of the north will become more and more applicable in the next decade.

The people who live there now, those who have made it their way of life, and those whose way of life it always has been, should have responsible and elected representatives in this House who can be recalled, rather than two appointees sitting in Ottawa for six months, sitting in Florida for four months and then spending two months worrying about the people of the north.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, before the hon. member resumes his seat, may I ask him a question?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Does the hon. member agree?

**Mr. Knight:** I agree.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Since, whether we like it or not, we have the other place, since other parts of Canada are represented in the other place and since it is not yet abolished and is part of the Parliament of Canada, would the hon. member deny the two northern territories representation in this part of the Parliament of Canada until such time as the other place is abolished?

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Speaker, does the hon. member know that this party is not represented in the other place? Regardless of what he may think, the other place is not representative of the people as a whole, no matter whether they are appointed from the province of Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories or the Yukon. The best thing we can do for the ordinary people of this country is to abolish that place once and for all.

**Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Cornox-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, if this little debate we are having today does nothing else, at least it will put this chamber in its proper perspective because, very obviously, while the bill we have before us is in the name of a member of the government, its only

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defenders appear to be sitting in what are sometimes called the official opposition benches. I think that illustrates very well the point that when it comes right down to it, in parliament the Liberal-Conservative combination sits in one part of the House and those of us who sit over here really form the opposition.

Be that as it may, the bill was introduced by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), and in the few remarks he made when introducing the bill he referred to the fact that this was not the first time in the history of Canada when it had been proposed that there should be in the other place representatives from the Northwest Territories. That brought to my mind the fact that what is sometimes referred to as the queen city of the plains was once the capital of the Northwest Territories, and that my mother went to normal school there in those days in order to learn to be a teacher in the Northwest Territories. I suppose, although I do not remember her ever mentioning it to me, that she had the benefit of the representation at that time of a senator from the Northwest Territories.

• (2100)

In due course, not very long before I arrived to become a Canadian, the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were born and the idea of having members from the Northwest Territories in the second chamber apparently disappeared at about that time. In my humble observation I have not noticed that either of the territories has suffered materially or spiritually in that interval through lack of an official voice in that place on the other side of this building.

The hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) was making a great deal about the idea of a wholly representative Parliament of Canada and about full representation for the people of the territories. This brought to my mind the question of just what is representation in the other place. The province from which I come has six senators, so does Alberta, so does Saskatchewan and so does Manitoba. If one wants to suggest that British Columbia has full representation in the other place, I might be inclined to say that that was a satisfactory representation, but it is certainly not full representation on any geographical or population basis.

It strikes me as rather strange that in the approximately 20 years since I first came to this chamber, to the best of my recollection I have never heard one member of any party from British Columbia, from Alberta, from Saskatchewan or from Manitoba stand in the House and complain that the western provinces were not properly represented in the other place. To me, this gives a rather hollow ring to the eloquent plea of the hon. member for Yukon about full representation for the people of the territories, because obviously—and this should not be lost upon the House—the question of representation in the Senate is a small thing to the people of the four western provinces since not one member from any of those provinces, to the best of my recollection, has ever seen fit to rise and complain about any degree of underrepresentation in the other place.

I did a quick calculation out of curiosity and, based upon the fact that New Brunswick has ten honourable