

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

● (10:00 p.m.)

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):** Mr. Speaker, for the business tomorrow we will start with the bill to amend the Publication of Statutes Act. After that is finished we will go on to the resolution preceding the Windfall amendment for the Canadian National Railways, and thereafter we will return to the resolution stages of the three bills we were considering this evening.

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

A motion to adjourn the house under provisional standing order 39A deemed to have been moved.

**HARBOURS—ROBERTS BANK, B.C.—CONSTITUTIONAL JURISDICTION RESPECTING RAILWAY LINE**

**Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, a week ago today I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) the following question, as recorded at page 326 of *Hansard*:

In view of the situation of continuing conflict concerning British Columbia Hydro's rail route to Roberts Bank, and in view of the fact that the provincial government controls a sole and vital link between two federal facilities, the port and the national railway system, what action does the federal government intend to take in regard to the problem of constitutional jurisdiction that is involved?

It would be almost possible, Mr. Speaker, to overestimate the amount of concern that this matter is causing among citizens of the lower mainland of B.C. As a matter of fact, my colleagues in this party have been trying unsuccessfully to get an answer to this question ever since we came down here. My colleague from Vancouver East was the latest to try this afternoon to get some ministerial statement on the matter.

The British Columbia cabinet has authorized the B.C. Hydro and Power Authority to build, or in part to rebuild 17 miles of track which would form part of an access rail line to Roberts Bank in the Matsqui area in order that initially shipments of coal from the Crowsnest area can be made to the new super port.

The reason that public opinion in the lower mainland area is so upset is that the provincial government has completely ignored the recommendations of the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board which, along with

[Mr. Peters.]

its 28 member municipalities, was given by this same provincial government the responsibility of land use planning and zoning for the whole lower mainland area.

The planning board strongly recommended an alternative rail route to provide service to Roberts Bank via the existing Fraser river industrial and railway corridor. The board warns that the B.C. Hydro route jeopardizes the future of the people of the lower mainland, of half the population of British Columbia. It advises that this new rail traffic would create additional major hazards of accident, air and soil pollution, would cause further noise intrusion, and would damage the appearance of the countryside completely unnecessarily. Land values in the immediate vicinity of the railway would go down and municipal tax revenues decrease as a result.

Most serious of all, the B.C. Hydro route would spell the destruction of the Boundary Bay area with its unparalleled recreation potential and its natural beauty on a magnificent scale. With this would go the destruction of one of the few remaining wildlife sanctuaries that exist in southern B.C.

No wonder that the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose), who represents a part of this whole area, declares that the proposed location of the railway defies every tenet of enlightened land use planning and reduces the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board to complete irrelevance. I believe that all members in this house from British Columbia share this view.

From the standpoint of the federal interest much is involved. A super port is to be built at Roberts Bank and the control of the port is clearly within federal jurisdiction. Equally clear is the need for the federal authority to have undisputed access to the port.

The provincially controlled B.C. Hydro railway line to Roberts Bank would be connected with the interprovincial rail lines of Canada, which again are clearly under federal jurisdiction. Surely this situation presents a constitutional problem for the federal government, one that calls for immediate consultation with the provincial authorities, and one that certainly cannot be dodged, at least any longer.

The fact that two federal cabinet ministers seem to have differing opinions about the degree of federal jurisdiction in this matter—they have made no secret of their differences, at least judging from speeches they have made in B.C.—merely points up the need for a speedy and decisive solution. They both