

The province of British Columbia has plundered its northern regions. I am concerned whether the commission which would be set up under this bill would sit in a dark room, because there is no provision for public meetings or public consultation. There is no provision for the commission to meet with regional groups, planning commissions and northern development people who are concerned with the human resource. These groups have been established in the area for the purpose of helping themselves in the absence of any assistance from the provincial government. There is no real provision in this bill for the commission to take into account the very serious problems the people in that part of the country must face on a daily basis.

There is the town of Fernie to which my colleagues referred. There is a very real desire on the part of the people in that region of British Columbia to secede and join those who still subscribe to the political philosophy that has served Canada and the free world for so long, rather than surrender to something we are experiencing in British Columbia today, commonly known as socialism but which is far removed from anything I would call socialism. I am certainly upset about that situation. I want to know whether this commission would have in its mandate authority to consider the political climate as well as the social, geographic and economic climate that exists in areas with which it is to concern itself.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Reynolds).

Mr. Reynolds: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should call it one o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate I want to make it known to the House and to Canada that if the good people in the towns and villages of British Columbia find that they can no longer tolerate their socialist government, they will be very welcome in the province of Alberta. I want to make sure that each and every one recognizes that there is a warm welcome awaiting him. This welcome is extended not only to people in the province of British Columbia but also to Saskatchewan and Manitoba. There is an important point that must not be overlooked when we are discussing the boundary between the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia; that is, the fact that no doubt in the future there will be a very important highway in the Howse Pass area, going from one province to the other. There have been many discussions about this highway, and we trust that they will continue.

It is the responsibility of the federal government to complete this highway in conjunction with the province of

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British Columbia. The province of Alberta has completed the major portion of the highway for which it is responsible. No doubt the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan are also interested in the construction of this road that will cross the boundary of Alberta, thereby providing an alternate route into central B.C. We trust that this will not be overlooked when the boundary is considered, because the federal government has great responsibility in this area.

Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): Mr. Speaker, my party does not intend to hold up this bill much longer. In fact, we would like to see it in committee now. We would have liked it to be sent to committee right away. However, since the parliamentary secretary seemed intent on having the bill debated, members from British Columbia and Alberta felt we had a few things to say about it.

I have several concerns in this area and several questions that I would like to put. For example, there is no reference in this bill to public hearings. That is a matter which very much concerns our province because we have in British Columbia a boundary on the south side at a place called Point Roberts. At present the matter is before a public hearing and is proceeding in the proper manner. It concerns me that some time in the future this government might bring in a bill to give Point Roberts away to the Americans without allowing the people in the area any say in the matter.

There is a paragraph in the preamble of this bill which reads as follows:

And whereas the legislatures of the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia having consented thereto, it is desirable that provision be made to declare the boundary line to be established from time to time by the said commission to be the boundary between those provinces—

The term "from time to time" scares me. As hon. members may know, this is a hunting area. One week you may shoot a moose, and the next week you may go back to get it but find that the boundary commission says it is now in another province. Such examples show the loopholes which exist in this bill. It has been put together very loosely, and I ask the government to be prepared, when the bill goes to committee, to answer some very serious questions because members of this party will certainly want to ask them. Now we will agree to let the bill go to committee and hope it will be considered very soon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.