

Yukon Minerals Act

the roads structure necessary to take the product to the market, then we have not come to grips with understanding the bill now before us. As we move the bill from this House into the committee, Mr. Speaker, I feel there is a real necessity to understand the size of the problem that faces the committee and to ensure that the committee understands the proposition by having an opportunity to look at it on the ground.

I am not going to comment on the point raised by the hon. member for the Yukon. He is something of an expert in the field because he lives with it daily. He would not be in this House unless he represented his people well in the field of mining development in the Yukon Territory. I do not feel competent to judge whether his criticisms are fair, but I feel that it is incumbent upon the government when considering this bill, just as it was in the examination of the white paper on taxation, to do such a thorough job that we cannot be accused, when the bill comes back at report stage and for third reading, of not understanding what it is about. We do not want to be accused of not understanding this territory of Canada which has the potential to become one of the richest corners of the world.

I make the plea that we do our job thoroughly as we have learned to do in other cases. We must do it here if we are to respect the territory of the Yukon and its people.

• (3:00 p.m.)

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, may I say at the outset that it was a matter of regret to me that the motion proposed earlier today by the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) was ruled out of order on procedural grounds. In commenting on the motion now before us I note that the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) in his remarks referred to the subject matter, shall we say, of the amendment that was proposed by his colleague this morning. I agree with what he said in that respect. Indeed, I think he underlined some remarks of mine yesterday when I spoke on what I felt should be considered as the rights of aboriginal peoples with respect to their heritage in the Yukon Territory. However, that is not really the subject matter of the motion now before us.

Mr. Nielsen: That was precisely the reason for the amendment.

Mr. Barnett: Hon. members are familiar with the vigorous and expressive way in which the hon. member for Yukon makes his views known to this House, and I certainly would not accuse him of fuddling or duddling when trying to let us know what he thinks about a matter. Nevertheless, as I listen to him from time to time I detect in the tenor of his arguments the kind of language which he may use in his profession as a pleader before the courts.

Mr. Nielsen: Does the hon. member mean that I did not have him in tears?

Mr. Barnett: I think that we in this chamber do not exercise any judicial function over the arguments of hon.

members. Nevertheless, I have detected certain flaws in the logic of some of the statements of the hon. member. Up to a point I felt there was a lack of logic in various aspects of his argument respecting the royalties that might be levied on the mining industry. However, I made some general comment on this subject yesterday. I made clear that I do not always share the views of the hon. member for Yukon as to the manner and method under which mining corporations ought to operate and what legal restrictions should properly be imposed on their methods of operation.

The motion we are considering says that the bill should not now be read the second time, but that the subject matter thereof should be referred to the standing committee. I say at once, Mr. Speaker, that this motion contradicts a previously stated position so far as this party is concerned. I and my colleague, the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Harding), have said that we are prepared to see this bill go to the committee after second reading. We hope that the fullest consideration will be given to it in committee. We reserve our right to determine after that whether we are prepared to agree to final passage of the bill in this House. I again say that this, of course, involves the question of report stage amendments as well as any appropriate motions that may be in order at third reading stage.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? Will the hon. member say whether he and his colleagues intend to support the amendment, since its sole purpose is to refer the subject matter of the bill to the committee, as opposed to the bill itself, thus enabling the committee to go into the question that we attempted to go into by way of our previous amendment, namely, that of native rights?

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, we in this House are often capable of reading into amendments what we want to read into them and of seeing in them that which we wish them to accomplish. I was coming to the general point which I think is in the mind of the hon. member for Yukon. He has implied that the motion was moved so that the subject matter of the earlier motion concerning aboriginal rights might be considered by the committee. I touched on this matter in my remarks yesterday and said that in my view there would be some opportunity for raising the question of the rights of native peoples during committee stage of the bill. I refer to clause 9 of the bill, which I think provides such an opportunity.

In light of the amendment that was moved earlier today, I do not think there would be the opportunity for the kind of complete consideration of the broad position that I think was proposed this morning. Nevertheless, I feel that this question could be considered in committee under the part of the bill which makes provision for such examination. I indicated yesterday that I intended to look at the question of appropriate amendments that might be considered by the committee in this regard.

In the course of the hon. member's remarks I think the minister referred to amendments that he had in mind which would be suggested for consideration by the committee. We certainly will be prepared to consider them