

corporation which works in the north is working against autonomy, in my estimation, and is restricting a corporation which is willing to move up there. So far there have been some very small moves, but not half as many as the people in the Yukon or the Northwest Territories would like to see. We would like very much to have the corporation controlled by the people of the two territories through their elected councils, and to hear their comments regarding restriction of the corporation. We should not put the people of the north again in a position where they have to come down to Ottawa, cap in hand, begging for money for projects to keep the power commission operating. I would therefore like to indicate, for the record, that I am strictly against this amendment as it is too restrictive on the corporation.

The minister mentioned that there are certain restrictions inasmuch as the estimates have to pass through the normal procedures of the standing committee, and so forth. This amendment would add a further restriction. Therefore, I would like to register my protest to this amendment on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Pursuant to Standing Order 75(11), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon) moved:

Motion No. 3.

That Bill C-13, an act to amend the Northern Canada Power Commission Act, be amended in clause 4 by striking out the word "Governor" where the same appears in line 23 at page 2 and lines 4 and 5 at page 3 and substituting therefor in each case the word "Commissioner".

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is either because the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth) has chosen not to understand, or he really has an honest lack of understanding for what we are trying to do, that he takes the position he does. The hon. member, in interpreting the view of my colleague from Rocky Mountain (Mr. Clark) and other members of this party who have spoken on these amendments, has distorted—I will not say deliberately but through either an innocent or honest lack of understanding—what we are trying to do here. But I challenge him and his loud-mouthed colleague beside him to try to distort this amendment, calling clearly, as it does, for the

Northern Canada Power Commission Act

decisions to be made by the people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The bill of the government calls for the setting of rates with the approval of the governor in council. For the edification of my friend from the Northwest Territories, that means the cabinet of this House of Commons; it does not mean the council of the Northwest Territories and it does not mean the people represented through their elected members on that council.

● (1550)

Mr. Firth: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). Which amendment is he referring to, the one we just deferred or the one we are dealing with now?

Mr. Nielsen: Again that illustrates the innocence, the lack of understanding of my friend from the Northwest Territories. We are debating motion No. 3. The government seeks to amend section 10 of the act through clause 4 of this bill. This amendment seeks to wipe out the approval of the governor in council and substitute therefor the approval of the people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories through their elected representatives on the respective territorial councils. If the hon. member has any further questions, I will be glad to hear them.

Mr. Firth: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Yukon seems to be getting a little excited about a matter that is also of importance to me. He does not seem to realize that I am supporting the amendment.

Mr. Nielsen: I am very glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker. We have finally got through to the hon. member for Northwest Territories. If he supports the amendment we are discussing now, then he certainly should have supported the last amendment which calls for exactly the same thing. I want to explain, in the hope of getting through to the minister, the reason why we in the opposition are advancing this amendment.

Mr. Benjamin: Wally is away ahead there.

Mr. Nielsen: Wally will have to get up pretty early in the morning to be ahead of anybody in this party.

Mr. Speaker, what has the governor in council got to do with setting rates for the consumption of electrical energy in the Yukon and Northwest Territories? Why should the governor in council be bothered with setting the rate for the consumption of electrical energy in my home? What sort of national priority does this have? I did not hear the comments of the minister with respect to the previous amendment, but the amendment before us in this bill seeks to have the rates established by the commission, subject to the approval of the governor in council. Surely, in this day and age of a national government being confronted with things much more important than setting my electric light rates, there should be some understanding of the priorities and the legitimate desire of the people of the Yukon and Northwest Territories to have this housekeeping task performed at home.

Where else in this country does the federal government decide on the light bills of consumers? Where else does the federal government, in the form of the governor in council, debate whether the commercial rate for hydro should be