

Northern Affairs

I freely admit that successful family farms are going along with the trend to specialization, and those who are recognizing the transition which is taking place will undoubtedly emerge successful. It is not the family farm that will disappear; it is the old concept of family operated diversified farming which is doomed. An advocacy of programming to maintain family diversified farms is as unfair as suggesting that rural electrification and highways are unnecessary.

I am convinced, as are many of my farmer friends, that the day is here when farmers must be prepared to establish area farming economic units, where they must produce to meet consumer demand, with the emphasis on the avoidance of costly surpluses. My point is substantiated by the statistics now available from segments of the agricultural industry which have, during the past six to eight years, established planned programs of production as procurement commissions for secondary industry.

The quiet revolution taking place in farm operations will undoubtedly spread. Expansion of this concept will grow in relation to consumer demand. What we need is more consumers. We need areas expanded through highways and good roads, areas which are close to raw materials such as those to be found parallel to the Alaska highway, so that farmers can become more involved in industry and so that they can give a hand to increasing the number of consumers.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I again commend the hon. member for Red Deer for his bill, although I cannot totally agree that the formation of a non-crown corporation is the correct approach to further development of the Alaska-Yukon highway. I commend the hon. member, because highways mean development. The highway between Edmonton and Fairbanks undoubtedly holds the key which will open vast natural resources. Accessible natural resources mean industry, and industry requires people. People are consumers. The urgent need for a more equitable balance between producers and consumers to enlarge domestic markets has never been more acute than it is today.

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill, No. C-9, providing for the establishment of an Alaska-Yukon highway authority. I support the idea because it seems to me that some sort of co-ordinating body is required in order to ensure that more rapid progress takes place in the development of this highway. The hon. member for Fraser

[Mr. Pringle.]

Valley East (Mr. Pringle) has stated that there have been rapid strides made in road construction. Maybe there have been, but if we look at the figures pertaining to this highway, 1,523 miles long, finished in 1943, we find that there are still 1,200 miles not paved, and generally in poor condition. I think this may have occurred because of the lack of a proper co-ordinating body to bring together the views of the various governments involved in the construction and maintenance of this road.

I do not need to repeat all the important developments that would result from improvement of this road. They have been mentioned by previous speakers, but tourism is one thing that cannot be overlooked. The Yukon contains a vast potential for tourist traffic development. The nice thing about tourism is that we are not really exporting anything. People come to look at our country and they leave their money here.

It has been stated that between \$6 million and \$12 million has been required annually for the upkeep of this highway under present circumstances, and that a total of \$200 million would be required for completion of the pavement. It appears that the expenditures now taking place, multiplied over a period of 20 years or so, would cover the cost of paving the road. If an Alaska-Yukon highway authority were established, which would actively work toward this goal, it might be reached in the near future.

Because of the importance of this highway I urge that serious consideration be given to this bill. I shall not say much more because I do not want it talked out. I have heard the hon. member for Fraser Valley East support the bill, and I presume he was expressing the view of his party. I hope no further members will speak on it, so that it can be passed and sent to the appropriate standing committee.

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to talk this bill out, but I too would like to commend the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) for introducing this very interesting topic to the house. I am one of the members from British Columbia. For years we in B.C. have been looking for a good access to the north as one of the major contributions which the federal government could make to the vital highway links that we need in the western part of Canada.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, for many years we have heard the slogan "Roads to Resources." That is actually what the hon.