

Northwest Territories Act

basic conception, should be an executive body rather than a legislative one but still argue to have it become a legislative body.

I listened to the hon. member for Brandon-Souris speaking, not only as a former minister of the department but as a Manitoban, about the early history of his province and its population when it became a province. He talked of the Conservative policy of expansion in the early days of our country's existence and referred to the railway.

Coming from British Columbia, my own approach is slightly different from his inasmuch as the province of British Columbia came into being in a manner different from that of the province of Manitoba. We were a Crown colony under the situation which he described as dating back to the days of George III. The colonial government, or in effect the executive, had the authority of taxation without being subject to the normal exercise of the veto power of a legislative assembly.

As I recall the population of British Columbia at the time of confederation with the rest of Canada in 1871 was something like 10,000 persons. I believe the figures were adjusted to permit more members than would normally have been allowed to come to parliament. What I should like the hon. member for Yukon to consider is that under that regime when British Columbia was a colony, although the Crown exercised a veto power the province nevertheless was required to depend entirely upon the taxes which could be raised from the few people then in the province.

Although I do not decry the vision of people like Sir John A. Macdonald in bringing confederation into being, I suggest and I hope that the Conservative concept of expansion was very different from that which will be followed in the expansion of the Canadian north today. The Conservatives were content to use the federal authority as an instrument for getting a railway started. They then proceeded to throw the baby out with the bath water. In other words, they gave to a private corporation the responsibility for carrying through the will of parliament, the result being that the returns from that development to a very great extent, went to the private developers rather than toward the real growth that could have taken place in Canada.

There has been some discussion in the house about deficit financing. Here is where

my basic philosophy differs from that of the hon. member for Yukon. I hope that there will be a co-ordinated, planned and increasing expansion of the northern area with the resources of the nation thrown behind that concept. I would further say that so far as I am concerned the returns from that investment, to which the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources made reference, should accrue primarily to the benefit and future well-being of the Northwest Territories. In other words, I would say that the taxpayers of the rest of Canada will benefit indirectly if the north grows. Certainly nothing more than a return of the initial investment made by the taxpayers generally in this period of deficit financing should be returned directly to the rest of Canada. If by some chance the returns from the north move into a surplus position before the people of that area have the full rights and responsibilities of provincial government as we understand them in other parts of the country, I hope that any such surplus will be put into a trust fund for the people of the Northwest Territories and will be made available to them for their future use in their own development. I hope that will be done when they achieve, as I am sure we all hope they will, full provincial status within confederation.

[Translation]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, I think this is another of those quiet debates, which is most edifying for the new members of this house.

I take part in the debate in a friendly spirit, as an eastern Canadian ready to cooperate with northern Canadians to promote a greater prosperity in the country.

It is not every day that I admire the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen)—I like him less when he acts the great uncompromising judge—but I believe his arguments yesterday and today concerning the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are enlightening and instructive.

I must say I share his views on almost all points as well as those of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale), whose comments were most constructive.

Mr. Chairman, as I believe the minister told us some time ago, when we were discussing a similar bill while studying the results of survey carried out by the Carrothers Commission in September, it is time that the house decide what are its objectives.

I think that when we finish studying the results of the Carrothers survey, we should