

Northwest Territories Power Commission

buildings of the community. In these large insulated pipes there will be first the steam pipe, which will provide the heating, and then the water pipes and the sewerage pipes. The water and sewerage pipes cannot be laid in the ground; they have to be heated or they freeze, and you know what can happen.

This experience has been gained in northern countries. In Canada I myself have visited the installations of the United Keno Hills mines at Elsa, where they have the system of large insulated pipes containing the steam pipes and also water and sewerage lines. The steam, which will generate the electric power, will be used to heat the water and sewerage pipes and also to heat the buildings of the community. There is a great economic advantage in having all the facilities administered under the same concern. This is the reason the bill will provide for an amendment to authorize the commission to provide these other utilities.

Another amendment will authorize the commission to operate outside the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. The purpose of the amendment is to make it clear that the commission might acquire plants, as well as construct and operate them, and to empower the commission to carry on business in a province, subject, of course, to the approval of the governor in council and in compliance with the laws of the province.

An instance of an advantage there is in regard to the Royal Canadian Signal Corps station which is situated three miles south of Fort Smith, which is built on the 60th parallel. There is a diesel plant operated by the commission at Fort Smith, and there would be an advantage in supplying the power from the commission's plant at Fort Smith to the Royal Canadian Signal Corps station, which is three miles inside Alberta.

There is also a proposed amendment which would provide for an investigation fund. This would provide the means of financing the investigation of power projects, which is generally necessary to determine the economic feasibility of projects. If a project is developed, the cost of investigation is restored to the fund and charged against the capital cost of the development; if a project is not developed, it is intended that the fund will be restored by parliamentary appropriations. The fund which will be proposed is in the amount of \$50,000. The other proposed amendments are minor and have to do with administration.

Mr. Michener: I do not propose to say anything other than to ask a question. Is it intended to give this commission a monopoly with regard to these various utilities in the Northwest Territories?

[Mr. Lesage.]

Mr. Lesage: No, Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact in Whitehorse, for instance, the generation and distribution of power for the civilian population is done by a private concern. There is quite an expansion at Whitehorse and the power facilities are not sufficient. Therefore there have to be other generating facilities. The private concern having the franchise at Whitehorse does not have the necessary capital to proceed with further developments. Therefore it is the intention of the commission to develop a hydro power plant somewhere near Whitehorse, and according to present plans the power will be sold wholesale to the airport, to the army and R.C.A.F. installations and to the private concern in question.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Chairman, I am sure this resolution is of great interest to the people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, and indicates the lines on which I think the power commission should be developed. The original act, while appropriate at the time, has been outgrown, and so that the activities of the power commission may be fully developed its scope should certainly be enlarged. I have always thought that Canada should have a federal power commission, and as the resolution indicates a forward step I am very glad to support it.

Power is so closely related to the development of Canada's natural resources that parliament should miss no opportunity to foster power development wherever possible within federal jurisdiction. The Northwest Territories Power Commission, or the Northern Canada Power Commission, as now proposed, will provide a vehicle for progress along these lines. I feel that the federal government has been lagging behind and should take the lead in establishing facilities for the development of northern Canada, though I am pleased to say there has been a decided improvement in the past few years. A major factor in this development will be the Northern Canada Power Commission, which will supply public utilities, in addition to supplying electrical power, outside the territories, where private enterprise may not be interested.

As I understand the resolution, the power commission will not only have the power to construct and operate hydroelectric plants but also to initiate and bring into being other related activities associated with power. A fund to enable the commission to carry on investigations and surveys is essential and it should be fully adequate. No other government in Canada has the authority to develop the territories and the federal government should accept its responsibility to the fullest extent.