

Mr. Jerome: Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware to what extent that would facilitate the handling of the bill, but I am not able to make any further statement at this time.

Mr. Nielsen: Could the Parliamentary Secretary indicate whether it is the intention of the government to withdraw the Yukon minerals bill and, if not, when is it likely to see the light of day again?

Mr. Jerome: It is not the intention of the government to withdraw that measure.

Mr. Nielsen: And when is it likely to see the light of day again?

Mr. Jerome: As I indicated on that list, it follows after the statutory instruments measure.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING MEMBERS FUNDS FOR INVESTIGATION OF PROJECTS, ADVANCES FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. MacEachen (for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) that Bill C-193, to amend the Northern Canada Power Commission Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on this bill. The remarks made yesterday by the Parliamentary Secretary and by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) about the far reaching effects of this measure, were very disturbing to a number of hon. members. From reading the act itself, the proposed amendments and the resumé read into the record by the Parliamentary Secretary, it would appear that the purpose of the original Crown agency was to supply electric power and other public utilities in northern Canada. I wish to say a few words primarily to support some of the contentions offered and some of the questions raised in respect of the infiltrations of government and the consequent discouragement of private investment, not only so far as the Yukon is concerned but also the Northwest Territories and Labrador, which of course is one of the great frontiers of the Atlantic region.

● (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member at this early stage of his remarks, but I am inclined to place some close limits on the debate we should have on this bill. I realize that since the debate started yesterday we have gone rather far from the principle of the amendments which are before us at this time. Although I realize this might have been done a little earlier, today I must bring to the attention of hon. members that what we have before us are very specific amendments. The act which this bill seeks to amend is

Northern Canada Power Commission Act

not before us. I have some doubt concerning whether at this stage we should become involved in a debate on the policy of the government as it affects all northern regions of Canada. I do not wish to be unfair to the hon. member. I always hesitate to raise a point of order, especially before an hon. member has spoken. Perhaps I am being unfair in this instance because I am not sure what the hon. member proposes to do. However, I feel that at one point or another there, should be a statement by the Chair to the effect that we should try to limit our discussion to the bill which is before us.

The rule of relevancy is one of the most difficult rules for the Chair to apply. Very often after an hon. member has spoken, the Chair rises to say we have gone beyond the terms of the legislation before the House. I am not sure if the right way to do it is by making this statement before the hon. member has spoken, but I thought we might become too involved in difficulties if in the course of today, tonight, tomorrow and perhaps on subsequent days, we should engage in a general debate concerning policy in northern Canada and, as the hon. member suggested, not only in the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories but even in Labrador or perhaps other northern regions of the country. All this having been said, I am sure the hon. member will have an interesting contribution to make and we will follow it with interest.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order raised by Your Honour, perhaps I might say with respect that Your Honour's lack of familiarity with the bill and the legislation which is in existence might be responsible for the comments Your Honour has just made. I point out to Your Honour that the bill under discussion concerns an agency of government, the Northern Canada Power Commission, which has authority to conduct its activities not just in the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories but throughout the whole of Canada. The amendments which the bill before us purports to make, and which if passed would become law, affect indeed every region of Canada in light of the authority of the commission to operate in all parts of Canada.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me, with great respect, that not only are the hon. member's remarks in order but also all those made yesterday in view of the very broad operational authority which is conferred upon the NCPC by the initial legislation and by the bill before us.

Mr. Speaker: That is the hon. member's opinion. I do not share it entirely. In any event, the Chair will hear the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan).

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, back east there is an expression about taking the wind out of one's sails. I certainly would not wish to leave the impression that that has happened, but it could happen under certain circumstances. When I have finished my remarks I am sure Your Honour will be in a position to judge whether or not I have established the relevancy of my remarks. One reason I want to address my remarks in a general way is related to the conclusion voiced in 1969 by the Yukon Electric Company at a committee hearing when it