

*The Address—Mr. Nielsen*

The only way we are going to have an input into the important questions being discussed this week is by having the same powers as all other Canadians.

I should refer to just one clause in the constitution amendment bill which will be under discussion at the conference taking place this week. Clause 11, for instance, sets the term of the elected assemblies at the federal and the provincial levels, whilst clause 28 makes it clear that the charter may be extended to the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories in the same manner as to the provinces. Surely this is a question upon which we in the Yukon should be making the decisions. What right have the nameless and faceless hordes of bureaucrats here in Ottawa with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to impose their decisions and will upon the people of the Yukon?

Of course the position of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Faulkner) is the same as that of the Prime Minister; it had better be or he would go the same way his predecessor went when his views differed. "Participatory democracy" seems to have become unfashionable these days. They brag about "the consultative process." They speak about consulting with the people before decisions are made. That was the thrust of the answer given by the President of Privy Council today in answer to a question from this side of the House. "We have presented our views", he said; "we expect the views of the provinces now to be presented."

● (1222)

I am sure that hon. members do not realize the difficulties under which we operate in the Yukon with respect to land. It is virtually impossible to acquire the smallest piece of land in the Yukon for residential purposes or for a private developer. It is, of course, held in the name of the Crown federal. While they deny the right of the people of the Yukon to administer the disposition and the acquisition of lands, and they deny even the simplest application of an individual to acquire a small piece of land to develop it whether it be for commercial, industrial or for private purposes, at the same time they give away thousands of square miles under the COPE agreement. The minister, I understand is going to sign the agreement in principle either tomorrow or the next day without any consultation with the elected representatives of the people of the Yukon who sit on their assembly, and indeed without any consultation whatsoever with any of the native groups of the Yukon.

Virtually thousands of square miles have been given away to the Inuvialuit people of Northwest Territories. In addition, the minister, by unilateral act, established a wilderness area of 5,000 square miles in the Yukon. Does he discuss it with the elected representatives of the people of the Yukon sitting in their wholly elected assembly? He does not. Does he discuss it with the native people of the Yukon? He does not. And this is the process of consultation!

Notwithstanding the objections of the people of the Yukon, all of them, native and white alike, to the provisions of that COPE agreement, the minister is still going to be travelling to the Northwest Territories in a day or two to sign the agree-

ment in principle. That is not my idea of the consultative process. Contrast that, thousands of square miles that been ceded by the minister of Yukon lands, with the pitiful story of the people of the community at Haines Junction attempting to obtain 13 acres of land to provide for the orderly development of their community. Thirteen acres were finally obtained this year but it is not yet finalized because there is still the red tape of government to go through. But the people of that community first asked for these 13 acres in 1972 and six years had to go by, longer than the total elapsed time of the existence of native organizations in the north in their negotiations for a settlement of their claims. Thirteen acres they could not get, and yet thousands and thousands of acres the government literally gives away with the stroke of a pen. This is not our idea of the democratic process. We have said repeatedly that the title to lands in the Yukon should be in the hands of the elected members of the legislative assembly. That is one of the ways that development of the Yukon could be stimulated in order to permit for the national good the true potential of this resource rich area in Canada.

The other example I want to draw to the attention of members is the position of this government with respect to the length to which they are prepared to go in negotiating the settlement of aboriginal rights in the Yukon. Again, they are prepared to cede to the native organizations a proper stance on the part of the government. The only difference we have is one of degree. There are thousands of square miles on land given away but none to any other segment of the Yukon society which, incidentally, constitutes 80 per cent of the population. The government is also prepared to cede, by way of negotiation, the right to resources in hundreds of square miles of land in the Yukon. Revenues from those resources the native organizations have demanded and they are going to get them. Again, any difference in viewpoint is one of degree.

They are going to get a share of resource revenue from resources mined in the Yukon, but not a word as to the same rights being given to the elected assembly of the Yukon. So there seem to be two standards that the minister is practising here, and of course he wears two conflicting hats in his portfolio. That is a matter a Conservative government would clear up in a hurry, namely, the splitting of that portfolio so there would not be this constant conflict with every decision that the Minister of Indian Affairs (Mr. Faulkner) has to make and the juxtaposition to decisions he makes with respect to developing the north, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

That brings me to another subject which is dear to the hearts of Yukoners at the moment, and that is the northern pipeline. This is the natural gas pipeline which is being constructed to bring the product from Prudhoe Bay through Canada to the United States. The Lysyk inquiry recommended the setting up of a heritage fund that would provide the basis upon which Yukoners could achieve legitimate aspirations with respect to the same rights and privileges enjoyed by all other Canadians. That heritage fund was negotiated down the tube by the President of the Privy Council in his negotiations