

*Yukon and N.W.T. Government*

**Mr. Burton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assure you that I will conclude my remarks in a few minutes. In Alaska at the present time oil companies are preparing to build an oil pipeline across the Alaskan mountain ranges to the Pacific Ocean. They are already shipping in pipe to build the pipeline, but according to the latest information which I received the United States government has not yet given approval for the construction of the pipeline because some of the oil companies had not agreed to some of the conditions that had been set out by the U.S. government, or that it was attempting to set out. Thus I suggest great care is needed to ensure that the legitimate aspirations of the northern people are recognized. Nevertheless, we must build for the future, taking into account the concerns and the needs of all people in the north and not just of those people who possess a degree of economic power.

• (4:10 p.m.)

One point I wanted to deal with very briefly, Mr. Speaker, was the source of revenues. It has been noted, for instance, that in the Yukon only a little over one-third of the revenues required for government come from local sources and the rest is financed basically by the federal government. It is also noted that the figure for the Northwest Territories is about one-fifth, or 20 per cent. I would suggest that this is not a valid argument for holding back an extension of powers to northern governments. What is the situation in some provinces at the present time? I do not have the figures in front of me but I believe that in the provinces of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, for instance, about 50 per cent of their revenue originates from the federal government.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the basic approach in dealing with northern problems must be to start with the people who live there and with their children; we must show concern for their future needs. We must do this if we are to develop an adequate approach which takes into account these concerns and considerations.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to apologize to my colleagues for my grating voice. This slight indisposition is not due to my visit to the North but rather to a particular situation which prevailed in Ottawa. As a matter of fact, if I had stayed

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard).]

longer up North, I would probably have avoided this because of the dry and brisk climate in that region.

I have not immediately answered the previous speaker because I believe that it is wiser to wait and hear all the arguments of those who take part in the debate before answering. If I had made any comments at the beginning of the debate, I would not have had the pleasure of hearing all the arguments of the hon. members. That is why I waited a while before answering.

I wish to thank all hon. members who have taken part in this debate for their objectivity and sincerity.

I am surprised to find that once again we are, to a certain extent, having a debate on the constitution. During my numerous visits to the North, even if I have not lived there, I had the opportunity, as Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, to visit at least some 40 localities north of the 60th parallel. And I must say that during my talks with numerous Indians, Eskimos and other citizens of the Northwest Territories, as well with the representatives of the various councils, I was never asked any questions about constitutional problems.

On the eve of the day when I introduced the new government policy on constitutional matters for the Northwest Territories and the Yukon in particular, I had the pleasure to take part in a radio program during which the people of Whitehorse and the Yukon could call me in order to ask questions on topical issues which could be of interest to them. Everyone in the Yukon knew at the time that the next morning I was going to address the Territorial Council on constitutional development.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of the Yukon did not ask me one single question on that subject. They talked to me about all their problems concerning education, housing, pollution but no one asked me a single question on the constitutional development of the territory.

Too often, in my own province I have seen too many good things sacrificed on the altar of autonomy or the constitution, to make me like this kind of debate. However, since the opposition has seen fit to bring up the subject today, I should like first to deal for a few minutes with the remarks made by my hon. friend, the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), concerning the request of the elected representatives of the Yukon territory, in particular the resolution they passed early in