

Yukon and Territorial Lands Act

elected to govern should govern. To draw an analogy with respect to this House—I hope hon. members will forgive me for raising the matter, in view of the editorial in today's *Globe and Mail*—we recently passed a bill to increase members' pensions.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Shame.

Mr. Nielsen: And I hear rumours abounding that perhaps our salaries are going to be increased.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Nielsen: Under the provisions of this bill the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) would have to go cap in hand to the Deputy Minister of Finance and say, "Please, we would like a little more pension," or, "a little more salary." That is what members who are elected to the council in the Yukon are expected to do. They have to go to a civil servant—

Mr. Chrétien: To me.

Mr. Nielsen: To the minister, through a commissioner. In any event, it is through a civil servant first. They have to go to him, he gets in touch with the assistant deputy minister, who gets in touch with the deputy minister, who gets in touch with the minister. This business about consultation is not going to wash. The committee introduced these amendments on consultation because there has been no consultation with respect to the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Surely the elected representatives of the people should not have to go cap in hand to a civil servant and say, "Look, there is some business we would like to do in Watson Lake, 300 miles away. Could we have 10 cents a mile for gasoline if we use our own cars?" Surely an elected representative should not have to say to a civil servant "I want to make a telephone call, on government business, to Beaver Creek. It will cost \$1.50. Do you think you could pass that?" Why should not the representatives have the right to pass these expenses themselves? If that democratic principle is wrong, what are we doing here in raising our own pensions and salaries?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): A good question.

Mr. Nielsen: The minister made much in saying that this creation of an executive council is a great step forward in constitu-

tional development. My goodness, Mr. Speaker! Here we have three civil servants who have invited two elected representatives of the council to sit with them, with the three civil servants forming the majority. Can anyone tell me that those three civil servants will take instructions from the two elected members? Surely the democratic principle is that the majority of the elected members should govern. How are they going to govern with a minority on a committee that in effect will be told what to do by the minister?

For the information of hon. members who do not have any idea of the extent to which this pernicious principle applies, it goes this far: if the minister wants to cut out the teaching of social studies in our schools, he can do it. He will tell the commissioner to direct the committee to do this, and introduce a bill in council, or whatever method he chooses, and it will be done. The minister may structure the educational system exactly as he pleases. Should not that power lie in the hands of the local people, and not here in Ottawa? Where does that power lie in the minister's own province, and how jealously does that province guard its right with respect to that particular power? Why shouldn't we have the same kind of power in the Yukon for the elected representatives of the people? Why should we be governed in that regard by the bureaucrats?

The minister says that the amendment represents a first step in this direction. That is not the case. The first step in this direction was taken in 1960 through section 12 of the act, when an advisory committee on finance was established. It would have been a simple matter to amend this section to make that committee the executive committee and leave the civil servants out of it. So much for the power of committees, Mr. Speaker. So much for participatory democracy. In the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development, party lines were crossed by the NDP, the Liberals and the Conservatives—even by the Parliamentary Secretary to the minister and by the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) who is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. They all voted for the amendments and for this particular one that the minister wants to toss out.

We are told that the committees system is working well. We are told there is much more force now in the committees system, and backbenchers are being used so much that they can make a really effective contribution to government. We are told that this is really