

Northwest Territories Act

urgent. In any case the minister may take it as notice.

Is the minister, in co-operation with the Department of National Defence, making any preparations for a ceremony next year, being centennial year, to observe the 50th anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge, that ceremony to take place at the monument at Vimy Ridge in France?

Mr. Speaker: I am in agreement with the hon. member who posed the question that the urgency is not readily apparent, and the minister might want to take it as notice.

Mr. Churchill: It will take a year for this government to make preparations.

Hon. Roger Teillet (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can certainly inform the house that preparations are being made. There was a question, because of the timing of veterans week in Canada, as to the actual date of the ceremony, but certainly it is intended to proceed next year in Europe with a commemoration of that battle.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS**RECONCILIATION OF COMPANY AND CANADA PENSION PLANS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. In view of the difficulties in existence at the present time among members of the I.L.A. and the C.B. of R.T. unions and the C.N.R. with reference to the combining of the C.N.R. pension plan and the Canada Pension Plan, would the minister consider having someone from his department meet with the parties concerned to help solve the problem? I regret I have not been able to give the minister notice of this question. Maybe he will wish to take it as notice.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): I think that would be advisable, Mr. Speaker.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ACT**AMENDMENTS RESPECTING ELECTED MEMBERS, INDEMNITY, ETC.**

The house resumed, from Thursday, May 12, consideration in committee of Bill No. C-146, to amend the Northwest Territories Act—Mr. Laing—Mr. Rinfret in the chair.

[Mr. Churchill.]

On clause 1—*Council.*

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Chairman, I thought under our new rules clause 2 should be considered first?

The Deputy Chairman: Not in this case.

Mr. Nielsen: Then I shall speak to clause 1. This clause deals with the composition of the council and provides that the existing council of nine be increased to 12 members, seven of whom will be elected and five appointed by the government, as opposed to the existing situation where only four members of the council are elected and five are appointed by the government.

Yesterday I elaborated on the undemocratic principle involved in the appointment of members to what is purported to be a body representative of the people of the Northwest Territories. The only reason advanced by the minister for the appointment of members to a legislative body was to introduce some sort of expertise to it, the implication being that that was not available from the population in the Northwest Territories.

I suggest that principle cannot be accepted. As the hon. member for the Northwest Territories knows full well, whenever a territorial legislative council desires to have that kind of expert advice it can be called by having witnesses appear before the council. He himself on occasion has appeared as an expert witness before the legislative council of the Yukon, and indeed gave that council some very sound advice with respect to matters pertaining to hospital insurance. There is no reason why the same kind of procedure cannot be adopted in the Northwest Territories.

The excuse that these experts must be appointed to the council in order for it to function properly is an extremely shallow one and I would urge the minister, before taking that action, to reconsider the principle embodied in this clause. I suggest to him that the clause should read the same as section 9 in the Yukon Act, which sets forth:

There shall be a council of the Yukon Territory, which shall be composed of five members elected to represent the electoral districts to be named and described by the commissioner in council.

That would have the effect of eliminating appointed members and making the council of the Northwest Territories a wholly elected council with truly elected representatives of the people of the Northwest Territories, without any injection of the government's views through appointed members. There is no justification whatsoever for the appointment of