

Yukon and N.W.T. Government

the other paper. With respect to the Yukon paper, let me point out that the population figure is stated as being 16,000—a gross misrepresentation. In that background paper, the Indian population is stated to be about 16 per cent of the total population of the Yukon. Nothing is mentioned about the fact that number includes the Indian people from Atlin, Telegraph Creek and Lower Post—all B.C. locations. The fact is that it is closer to 10 per cent or 11 per cent, and believe me I have reason to make certain of the Indian population at the time of elections.

On page 2 of the background paper, there is a statement that agriculture is an economically marginal activity because of climatic conditions. That is simply not true, and the policy of the government in closing farms is certainly a negative one in that connection. The Yukon and the Northwest Territories lost their truest friend, and one dedicated to northern agriculture, when Mr. Nowasad passed away.

Throughout the paper the false idea is put forward that there is a distinct form of government in the Yukon. This is simply not so. It is a distortion to say that over the past five years the federal government has spent some \$62 million in the Yukon to assist in resource development and to compare that with direct revenues of about \$4,000.

Then, the background paper indicates that, in addition to game as a resource, land in the surrounding communities and settlements is being made the responsibility of the Commissioner, as if to say that these powers are being transferred to something distinct from the Government of Canada or the minister. This is the kind of invidious distortion that is made here.

I want to deal just for a moment with the speech which was made by the minister before the council. I am sure that my colleague, the hon. member for the Northwest Territories, has noticed that the so-called white paper is headed "Speech by the Hon. Jean Chretien, P.C., M.P., Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the Council of the Northwest Territories" while his Yukon speech was "before the Territorial Council". He said, and I quote from the second page of his speech:

• (12:20 p.m.)

—I shared the confidence of my predecessor that government policy on the constitutional development of the north could be placed before you at an early date.

[Mr. Nielsen.]

I want to say this as kindly as I can, Mr. Speaker. His predecessor, now the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing), never had any intention of granting the smallest scintilla of reform in either territory.

The minister went on to say:

The first objective is to protect and further the legitimate interests of the Canadian people in developments in the north—in its economic development and particularly resource development and the potentially immense wealth that may result from this.

He went on to imply that because of the relatively small population in the Yukon, and because the Yukon can support itself economically, responsibility is not being passed to the elected members of the council. Indeed, in a recent press release it was said that these two factors were the ones that were preventing any kind of reform. That is the argument the Yukon councillors have been met with each time they have made their request. But now, all of a sudden, there is a burgeoning economic situation in the Yukon. In this connection I should like to quote from the *Ottawa Citizen* of November 13—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Continue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Does the House give unanimous consent for the hon. member to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nielsen: I thank hon. members for their indulgence, particularly in view of the fact that this matter is so close to the hearts of the people of the Yukon and Northwest Territories. They want a fair hearing on it, and fair participation in the debate. May I quote from the *Ottawa Citizen* of November 13 as follows:

Secondly, the potential wealth of the Yukon, particularly the discovery of Prudhoe Bay oil in Alaska, is so great that the federal government simply can't go along with the idea that they should benefit a population that constitutes less than 0.1 per cent of the total Canadian population.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are struck by the swings and the roundabouts alike. On the one hand, we have been told for many years, "I am sorry, you cannot have any form of responsible government, any reform, because you are not paying your way." On the other hand, we are now told that because of these great discoveries, and the potential revenues