

Yukon and Territorial Lands Acts

I regret to say I am disappointed that the hon. member made these statements, because I believe he has a sincere interest in northern Canada. It may have been through a lack of understanding or possibly he has not been in the north as often as he was in earlier days. He may even have been partisan, although I would hate to accuse him of that.

Amendments have been suggested to this Bill C-212, particularly with respect to giving the councils of the two territories more power and authority. With respect to the Northwest Territories, I believe there is greater opportunity for participation on the part of the native people as elected councillors in the north. The increase in the number of members on the council will make it possible for wider participation in our democratic process. To this point, we have had the service of three native persons, Simone Michael from Frobisher Bay, Abe Okpik from many parts of the north and Chief John Tetlichie Charlie. Each in their own way have brought a particular point of view to these councils.

One of the great features of this particular bill is that we will see a greater participation on the part of the regional people of the north in the affairs of the council. However, as I mentioned yesterday, the minister should go one step further in relation to the number of Indian councillors to be elected. I would like to see four rather than the three proposed by the minister. However, this can be discussed and argued at the committee level. I hope by the time this bill reaches the committee the minister will have seen the wisdom of this particular action. I say this for a number of reasons. I believe it would better reflect the community interest in the proposed constituencies in the territories.

Another provision of this bill which I feel puts a real responsibility on the council is the one which gives council members the responsibility of determining their own indemnities. I refer also to the amount of expenses that they will be receiving through the Commissioner in Council in order to do their job. Travel in the north is costly and the expenses incurred while working on the territorial council as well as the loss of income will create problems. Unless the council is in a position to establish a reasonable level, I am afraid that the kind of representatives we want to see on the council might not be available. We are leaving this question to be decided by the territorial council.

In this particular bill, the Commissioner in Council is being given the power to prescribe

[Mr. Orange.]

the qualifications of persons as electors, such as age and so on. The north is a young man's country. The present population of the north is less than 40,000 people. There is a high percentage of young people. Since the majority of the people in the north are Indian, Eskimo and Métis, it would be to the advantage of the people of the country to give younger people the right to vote. I commend the government for the forward step in telling the council to decide who they want to vote, and also to decide how long a person must be resident in the territories before he is eligible to vote.

The north is on the threshold of major resource development. The *Manhattan* is making a second voyage through the Arctic waters. We know the action that has been taken by this government in respect of the conditions under which it will operate. I do not think any of us who know or who have seen those waters can help but be concerned about what will happen if this voyage is successful. I hope that we take time before we allow oil tankers and other major ships to move through our Arctic waters at any time of the year. I hope we have all the answers regarding pollution and the control of pollution in the event of a disaster. We should know much more about this whole area than we do now. I would like to see a moratorium placed on the movement of these ships through our waters until such time as Canadians are satisfied that we can control the situation.

Resource development in the north in this decade, the 1970's, will see the start, if not the completion, of pipelines down the Mackenzie Valley. In all probability there will be a natural gas pipeline to help get the gas in Prudhoe Bay to market. It may be that the Canadian gas discoveries in the Mackenzie can be hooked into this particular line. Those of us who have thought about the Prospects realize the impetus a pipeline can give to our north. The construction and operation of such a pipeline can mean a great deal to the growth and development of the people who live in the north and to Canada as a whole.

Canadians are excited about our north. In the last three or four years, Canadians have shown a great desire to learn about and to see that part of their country. Because of our north, Canadians have an opportunity to establish an identity which will make them different from any other nation in the world.

Mr. Len Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):
Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in this