

Yukon and N.W.T. Government

breed and I think the time has come to listen to their reasonable requests.

Mr. Russell C. Honey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): In the time I have available, Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to bring the debate back to the basis of the resolution in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). I intend to confine my remarks essentially to the Yukon and in particular to the speech this morning by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). I do so with the knowledge that my colleague the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) has, as always, very capably defined and dealt with the problems and concerns of the people in his riding.

The remarks this morning by the hon. member for Yukon were essentially based on the resolution passed by the Yukon Council. I also have a copy of the resolution to which he referred. It seemed that his was the argument of a skilled advocate and I give my hon. friend full marks in that regard. He realized that in his opening remarks he overstated his case and did the best he could to produce some facts to back up his case. The facts were not necessarily those which he stated in his opening remarks. I suggest he was really trying to readjust the facts to fit the evidence before us today.

There has been legitimate concern in the north about the movement toward the area of self-government. There has been concern there over the announcement made by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) when he was in the Yukon last week. There was concern over the steps the minister indicated as government policy in his speech to the council; they did not go as far as the members of the Territorial Councils and some residents of the north would like to see. I think there is the concern that my hon. friend expressed in his remarks this morning, namely, that the position taken by the Northwest Territorial Council in its resolution really went much further than it could reasonably and rationally expect a responsible government to go.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, will the hon. member permit a question? He must have heard me read the resolution of the Yukon Liberal Association. Can the Yukon Liberal Association expect the support of the hon. member and his party?

Mr. Honey: Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of the resolution. I take it to be a valid resolution of a political association, in this case

Liberal. My hon. friend based his argument essentially on the resolution of a duly elected body, the Yukon Territorial Council. That is what I want to deal with now. The hon. member for Yukon said—I think I can quote his remarks almost verbatim—that the members of the Yukon Council do not desire provincial status and in no way can their recommendations be construed as being a request for provincial status. Those were the remarks of the hon. member for Yukon this morning when he dealt with the resolution of the Northwest Territorial Council.

I wish to look at that resolution now because I think I can probably interpret it as well as the hon. member. I make the submission to Your Honour and hon. members of the House that the resolution is in fact a request for provincial status.

Mr. Nielsen: No.

Mr. Honey: The hon. member says "No". I think I am entitled to make an interpretation of the resolution. I am prepared to read the words. My hon. friend read some of them.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Honey: Mr. Speaker, I have the floor. The hon. member dealt with the resolution. If he will permit me to deal with it, the hon. members can form their own opinion. I quote from the resolution:

A) The Council of the Yukon Territory to be known as the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Is there any difference, Mr. Speaker, between a Yukon Legislative Assembly and the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly or the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly?

B) The number of members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly to be increased to 15 and the term of the Assembly to be increased to four years.

That certainly is not inconsistent with provincial status. In particular, the suggestion of a four-year term indicates an attempt to bring it in line with other legislative assemblies.

(C) The Advisory Committee on Finance to be replaced by an Executive Council of not less than five members—

I want to underline this:

—with full executive powers in the following classes of subjects (i) Education, Health & Welfare—

I am sorry the hon. member for Yukon has had to leave temporarily. He will know the percentage of cost that these items represent.