

*The Territories*

House and in committee, and on many occasions have heard him take one position in committee and another position in the House. I have seen him do that so many times it is not going to surprise me one iota to see him flip-flop the same way on this occasion.

**Mr. Watson:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I have taken a consistent position on this subject in the Yukon and in this House over approximately seven or eight years. I will allow the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) to continue and make my position very clear a little later on this afternoon.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I am not going to say anything about the arguments that have gone before. I could say, for example, that the minister who preceded the present minister had always put a price tag in respect of the Yukon people having democratic institutions. He always said that when we could pay our way, we would have responsible government. Another argument he used, to which I could refer but will not, is that we have not enough people and until we do we cannot have responsible government.

I have always drawn attention to the fact that in 1869-70, when Manitoba was carved out of the then District of Assiniboia of the Northwest Territories to become a province, it had only 1,051 eligible voters. Our last list was considerably larger than that. As far as the money argument is concerned, we all heard the parliamentary secretary to the minister and Councillor McKinnon say in the committee that even if they agreed with the argument, which they did not, the resource base in the Yukon now provides sufficient revenues to enable them to pay their own way. So if that argument was valid, it is completely destroyed by the economic conditions which exist today.

I do not want this resolution talked out, so I am going to suggest, with a maximum effort, to be reasonable and conciliatory that what we should do now is withdraw the resolution. I do not stop there. I do not think we should withdraw it, with that being the end of it, but for the purpose of what I am about to suggest it must be withdrawn. I suggest that the motion be withdrawn and that the subject matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and that the House give that committee the authorization to adjourn from place to place in Canada and that the necessary supporting staff accompany the committee.

I suggest that because from time to time there has been some doubt expressed by members opposite, I really know what I am talking about when I speak on matters concerning Yukoners and those in the Northwest Territories. There is some skepticism about whether I really tell it as it is when stating the views of Yukoners. The only way we are going to find out what those views are is by having the members of the committee go to the Yukon and to the Northwest Territories to hear the views of the people on the spot. I am sure they will leave committee members in no doubt whatsoever, and there is no doubt in my mind that the committee would report in the same manner it did in its eighth report to

[Mr. Nielsen.]

the House in 1973 in respect of the motion then passed unanimously in the Yukon. The rules do not permit me, as the mover of the resolution, to make that kind of motion. I would hope that my friend and colleague under the constitution, from the NDP, the hon. member for the Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth), will move the motion for me and that it will be seconded, because my motion in Whitehorse was substantially the same terms, by his colleague.

• (1720)

Having said that, I should like to conclude my remarks by expressing the hope that the House will accept the proposition and that we withdraw the motion and refer it to the standing committee, with authority to travel within Canada, to the north, to hear the views of the people.

**Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make a few remarks on notice of motion No. 13 that the resolutions of the Yukon territorial council and the Northwest territorial council for full and responsible government be implemented. I hope that the Liberal members opposite will not try to defer this motion by talking it out when we have reached the time of adjournment.

I am speaking on behalf of my colleague, the hon. member for the Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth) who cannot be here today because he is at an important intergovernmental conference in Edmonton on justice and the native people. I would like to take the opportunity to mention very briefly how very grateful we in the House are for the tireless efforts of the hon. member for the Northwest Territories on behalf of people living north of the sixtieth parallel. I think all hon. members will concede that it was due to his strenuous efforts that we now have convinced the government to introduce a bill very shortly that will provide for two members of parliament for the Northwest Territories. Certainly that is legislation that is long overdue.

Also, the hon. member for the Northwest Territories has been very active in the past week fighting against an excise tax of 10 per cent that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) was ready to impose on people travelling by boats with motors of over 20 horsepower. The hon. member gave a very good speech outlining how this would discriminate against trappers, hunters and native people in the far north who depend on boats as their primary means of transportation. We were very happy to see, as the result of his efforts, the Minister of Finance make an amendment to the Income Tax Act that will exempt travellers, hunters and those using boats as their primary means of transport from the 10 per cent excise tax.

I have had the distinct pleasure of travelling to the Yukon and meeting the people there and travelling about the territory. I was there for the founding convention of the NDP in 1973 and I was very much impressed, not only by the country up there but primarily by the people in the Yukon, their dedication and loyalty to the territory and their ability and articulation on the whole issue of