

• (12:10 p.m.)

3. That 4 members of the Territorial Council of the Yukon Territory be elected by a majority of the said Council to assist the Chief Executive and to be responsible for the administration of various departments of Government of the Yukon Territory.

The Liberal resolution refers to all departments, but the council only wishes at this time those which they enumerated in the resolution. Then, it goes on:

4. The necessary amendments to the Yukon Act and all other effective legislation be introduced forthwith to accomplish these aims.

That is the official stand of the Yukon Liberal Association. I can well remember the statements of the present Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing) and of the candidate who ran for the Liberal party in the Yukon in the last election. They stated the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was in full sympathy with these objectives, and they were certain that once the Liberal government was formed these objectives would be achieved. That has been held out as reform. In the Yukon, the minister said he is prepared to set up immediately an executive committee to consist of the Commissioner and his two Assistant Commissioners, plus one elected member of the Yukon Council. You have three civil servants who take their instructions from the minister inviting one elected member of the council to sit in on the decision making process. That is like the conclave of the Mandarins in Ottawa, the deputy ministers of the various departments, asking one or two members of the House to step across to the Rideau Club or somewhere to take part in the decision making process.

What kind of topsy-turvy democracy is that? If the members of the council had bitten at that bait, they would have permitted the civil servants to be smuggled into the legislative arm of the government up there. This is, in essence, what the clever scheme was. The council rejected that idea, and quite properly so. All that would occur if they were to accede to that kind of so-called reform would be that the Commissioner and his two assistant civil servants would have an office boy to run back and forth to tell the council what decisions have been made from time to time. It is a completely backward idea of a real democratic reform.

The choice of both parties and the unanimous choice of the council is certainly for an executive committee. The council asks for an executive committee of five, and so do the

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Liberal and the Conservative Associations. What can be so abhorrent about that? Why is it that the government continually rejects the reasonable requests of the council to have the same powers as those which the municipality of the city of Whitehorse has?

Why is it that throughout this country, in every province, indeed throughout North America in all likelihood, every municipality that levies taxes upon its taxpayers is entitled to spend those revenues? If the municipal councils of the country and of the various cities across the land can have that power, why cannot the elected representatives sitting on the councils in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories have it? Why, indeed, can they not have the same powers as the school board? The school board in the city of Yellowknife has more power than the councils. Why should we be so backward, so pathologically reluctant to extend the same rights to individuals across Canada?

Let me quote what the Prime Minister had to say in his opening statement at the second meeting of the constitutional conference in Ottawa on February 10 of this year:

The federal government insists that a charter of human rights should be an integral part of the constitution because it believes that those rights are equally important for all Canadians. Whether he be from Churchill, Trois Rivieres, Kamloops, Medicine Hat, Richibucto or Port aux Basques, the Canadian citizen must be assured everywhere of and represent, his most essential rights?

These are noble sounding words. He went on to say:

And why should this not be so? Are those not values common to all, and in which we all believe? Of course. And so, I ask you, gentlemen, why do we hesitate? Why are we reluctant to join together in guaranteeing to the citizen, whom we all serve and represent, his most essential rights?

What right can be of more value to all Canadians than the right to govern themselves? What right could be closer to their hearts than the right to say to their elected representative what should be taught to their children, to say how the money that they give in taxes should be spent? Those are noble sounding words. If they mean anything, they mean much more than what the minister said that he was going to do and what he said was government policy in the two speeches which he gave.

I may say that the papers that have been distributed as background information on the Northwest Territories and the Yukon are grossly misleading. I will deal with the papers on the Yukon and let my colleague from the Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) deal with