

Yukon and Territorial Lands Act

municate and consult with the members of council.

• (2:50 p.m.)

I know the problems of distance in the north. If an elected representative, for example, of the Northwest Territories on Baffin Island were to be called to Yellowknife for the purpose of making a small amendment in a regulation, he would need to fly, say from Pond Inlet. Sometimes at least he would need to travel from Pond Inlet to Frobisher, from Frobisher to Montreal, from Montreal to Edmonton, and from Edmonton to Yellowknife. This procedure is a bit too rigid, and these amendments would permit us to achieve some more flexibility for the purpose of consulting with the member before we introduce any new regulation. The same type of amendment will be discussed three times more in future, and I wanted to elaborate on this point right away.

So, I think that these amendments are only logical. They are brought in to cover all the points that were not predicted by the committee when it made that proposition which the minister accepted. Before taking my seat may I say that I had the opportunity of discussing this matter with the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) who unfortunately cannot be in the House today. I discussed this with him and he asked me to inform the House that he is in agreement with these amendments.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, what the minister has just said, and I say this with all the kindness I can muster towards him, displays his abysmal ignorance of the north. This amendment has nothing to do with the Northwest Territories absolutely nothing; so that his remarks about getting in touch with members on Baffin Islands and elsewhere in the Northwest Territories and consulting them about something happening in Yellowknife are absolutely irrelevant. His own amendment is being advanced to amend that portion of the bill dealing with—

Mr. Chrétien: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the minister rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I think the hon. member is playing on words on this question and taking my meaning out of context. I said that the remarks I was now making were to apply to

[Mr. Chrétien.]

many amendments. I agree with him that this amendment we are discussing has to do with the Yukon.

Mr. Nielsen: On a point of order—

Mr. Chrétien: I admit that this amendment has to do with the Yukon, but I made the reservation to the Chair that I was directing my remarks to the whole situation in the north. The point I made about the Northwest Territories perhaps does not apply to the Yukon. I took that example because I did not want to rise every time and repeat the same argument. I did it to save the time of the House, and only for that reason. I do not think the hon. member should be too unkind about what I said, and should understand why I said what I did.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, that was about as spurious a question of privilege as I have ever heard.

An hon. Member: You are never here.

Mr. Nielsen: I am sure that the Chair will give us an equal opportunity to raise similar questions of privilege and time, in addition to our debating time, to answer the minister each time he rises on such spurious questions of privilege.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. May I point out to the hon. member that it is not an uncommon practice in the House to allow a member who feels he has been misinterpreted the opportunity of rising to explain and clarify what he intended to say. That is a courtesy held out to all hon. members. Sometimes the Chair may be too indulgent. Having said that, I recognize the hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the minister's kindness, may I point out that that was not a question of privilege.

An hon. Member: Cheap.

Mr. Nielsen: If the hon. member who asserts I am cheap will kindly rise and say that, I will answer him, too. The minister made himself quite clear when he said that this matter concerned difficulties experienced in getting in touch with people of Baffin Island, and so on. Respectfully, I say that it has nothing to do with Baffin Island.

Mr. Chrétien: I explained that.

Mr. Nielsen: The amendment has to do only with the Yukon.