

*Supply—Indian Affairs*

boxes of shells and one or two fish nets they receive perhaps one box of shells and one fish net for every second family. I am hopeful that the department and the minister will resolve to treat the problems facing our northern Indian people as urgent and will discuss with them the provisions contained in treaties 8 and 11, which to date has not been done.

When I had the opportunity of saying a few words in the debate on the speech from the throne I touched on a subject which I believe is of great importance in the development of the country to the north. I refer to the provision of basic services to the communities there. I spoke at great length about the extension of adequate water and sewer services to the community of Inuvik. I must congratulate the minister and his department in that within three or four days of my speech they were able to announce the start of an experimental system at Inuvik. I know this was not necessarily as a result of the few remarks I made because I understand that action was under way prior to the debate in the house. However, I think this is an important matter which must be faced by the government of Canada together with the governments in the territories, both territorial and municipal.

In the process of transferring responsibility from the federal government to the territorial government I would like to see arrangements made whereby the senior government would take upon itself responsibility for initiating and establishing an adequate water supply, sewage disposal, electricity and basic housing in all northern communities. This is an opportunity for the federal government to show the seriousness with which it intends to develop and is developing the north. It seems to me that this would be a logical, reasonable and practical step.

In the process of opening up northern Canada communications and transportation are two of the obvious factors of great importance. The minister made reference this morning to the fact that within the last several weeks two air lines commenced operating jet equipment to the Arctic coast. This is true and it is a good thing. It is an example of the initiative that can be taken in the north by the private operator or entrepreneur.

However, Mr. Chairman, one of the difficulties with which we are faced is the development of adequate facilities. In many parts of northern Canada and the northern part of many provinces there are periods of the year when communities are completely cut off

from the outside. These periods vary from three to six to nine weeks, at break up and again at freeze-up. Apart from the obvious dangers that could arise as a result of epidemics, the over-all growth and development of these areas is greatly affected.

Yesterday I received a telephone call from a community in Keewatin called Eskimo Point. The object of the call was to see whether somehow or other the backlog of mail which apparently exists in Churchill could be moved out very quickly as the break-up was expected in two or three days. Fortunately the post office was one step ahead of us and there was no need to follow up this matter. But the point is that sometimes those in the south forget that a community of 200, 300 or 400 people can be completely cut off from the outside for a period of time.

The point I am trying to make is that there is urgent need for the development of adequate air strips in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory, as well as in other areas of Canada which at times are isolated and cut off from the rest of the country. I know the minister has proposed an air strip program which would bring year round transportation facilities to every community for which he is responsible. I know that this program has had some rough sledding at the hands of members of the Treasury Board. However, I should like to add my words of support in the strongest way for this program, with the hope that the minister will be able to convince his cabinet colleagues that the only way we will develop this great northern country of our is to provide adequate transportation and communication services to meet the growing needs.

Within the past several months it was announced that Yellowknife had been selected as the capital of the Northwest Territories. It was also announced that the commissioner of the Northwest Territories would move to the capital of Yellowknife. We are all anxiously looking forward to seeing the legislation brought before the house to bring about the development of responsible government in the Northwest Territories.

A few days ago I said I hoped that the legislation would be in line with the views of the people who live in these territories so that it will be passed readily by the house. There will be a certain amount of discussion of what the government is proposing and I suggest to the minister that there are three areas which he might want to consider before such legislation is brought before the house.

[Mr. Orange.]