

The Territories

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I must admit that this is a rather long speech because it appears to have gone on for a year and a half. However, I appreciate very much your recognizing me today so that we can once again discuss the matter of the Yukon provincial status.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I do not know where this hour has gone. So far there have been fifteen minutes spent on points of order raised by hon. members opposite. I am sure hon. members would like to see the motion disposed of. From the debate of February 3, 1975, I was under the impression—and far be it from me at any time to want to curtail the hon. lady—that she had concluded. She did not call it six o'clock on that day, and I suggest that if someone other than myself is to be recognized—and I thought I had been recognized—the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Cyr) feels pretty strongly about speaking and wants to speak. However, I really think the hon. lady had perhaps exhausted and completed her remarks last year.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): It is my understanding that the parliamentary secretary has three minutes left in her speech.

Mrs. Campagnolo: I greatly appreciate the fact that the Chair has allowed me my three minutes after a delay of a year and a half, so I will be quite happy to compose myself for a three-minute speech on the matter of provincial status as proposed by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). In view of the fact that such a great deal of water has gone under the bridge since our previous discussion, I think at this time it might be fair to reiterate the motion itself. The motion reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should immediately introduce legislation to implement the resolutions of the Yukon Territorial Council and the Northwest Territorial Council requesting that the government apply those principles of constitutional and democratic development that will establish a fully representative and responsible system of government to the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories respectively.

As a matter of fact, in the intervening time we have found that indeed there has been progress made in the two territories of Canada. We have indeed seen changes in the administration which indicate that the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are progressing down the road to self-realization at a rather rapid rate.

Mr. Nielsen: Down the tube.

Mrs. Campagnolo: I did not hear the hon. member. In any event, I should like to bring to the attention of my hon. colleagues the fact that Bill C-51, the Northwest Territories Representation Act, was enacted by parliament on March 13, 1975, to be precise. This bill amended the British North America Act and the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act to provide a second seat in the House of Commons for the Northwest Territories. This is another indication of the progress which has been made in the recognition of the two northern territories. It also provided for the establishment of a boundaries commission, as is the case in the provinces, to hold hearings and to make representations with regard to the division of the two territories into constituencies.

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner).]

I am sure I do not need to list the reasons for the second seat, as the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth) on several occasions in the past pointed out the difficulties of his mandate due mainly to considerations such as the size of his constituency and the important cultural, economic and geographical differences between the western and eastern areas, not to mention the communication and transportation problems involved in the extremely large expanses of the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

I am sure the last thing this government would want to be accused of would be to have gambled on the future of the Territories and to have undermined their promising potential by having proceeded too fast in pushing them forward to a new status.

Mr. Nielsen: Try us.

Mrs. Campagnolo: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to resume debate on the motion put forward by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). Even though over one year have elapsed since the House dealt with this matter for the last time, the hon. member does not seem to know precisely what has been done regarding the resolutions referred to in the motion. This situation is perhaps explained in part by the fact that he cannot precisely mention those resolutions.

When the motion was put forward for the last time in the House in February 1975, the hon. member referred to motion No. 1 of the Yukon territorial council, dated January 23, 1968—as recorded on page 2851 of *Hansard* of February 3, 1975. However, he did not refer to other resolutions.

I dare say he might have been thinking of motion No. 40, adopted by the Yukon council in April 1966. Now, the motion of 1968 is almost identical to motion No. 40; or perhaps was he thinking of motion No. 28, agreed to by the Yukon territorial council on March 30, 1972?

[English]

Mr. Nielsen: Take either one.

Mr. Cyr: Or perhaps he was thinking of two motions that the Yukon council passed on March 27, 1974, regarding Bill C-9? We do not know precisely to what resolutions of the Northwest territorial council the motion is referring to. And now, he has just told us to take either one. It could be the one that was passed on March 28, 1974, after the council had examined the provisions of Bill C-9 to amend the Northwest Territories Act.

● (1720)

Mr. Speaker, I dealt with this aspect of the motion because I think it is important, in view of the time that has elapsed since Motion No. 13 was officially introduced the last time, that is a year ago, it is important to know, as much as possible, to which resolutions the hon. member of the opposition was thinking when he presented his motion in October 1974, with a view to examining it and give it all due attention. After my remarks, doubtless my colleague