

Mr. LANG: I have never thought that situation over. On the surface of it, I think I would be inclined to favour that.

Mr. NIELSEN: There is that check and there is the proposed legislation.

Mr. LANG: I would not do without that check because we are receiving a lot of money at the present time that we are not earning and I would feel we need to be very careful. Many of us have not had the financial training that is necessary for that. I would very strongly emphasize that it would be subject to the commissioner's approval.

Mr. NIELSEN: Which in effect means the minister's approval.

Mr. RHEAUME: I have a new line of questioning. I notice that section 8 of the proposed Bill C-83 says: "the seat of government of the territory shall be at Fort Smith". I would like to ask Mr. Lang if he has any comment either for or against this particular location or if he has anything to say about the deliberations of the council that led up to the choice of one particular community over another, if he wishes to make the statement.

Mr. LANG: Mr. Chairman, I think that when this question was first raised—I am not certain whether I am right or not—I believe that Fort Simpson would have been preferred as the capital. Later on investigations and surveys were undertaken and it was found that the Fort Simpson location was not suitable for a large community. The only way we could have a capital close to Fort Simpson would be to build an entirely new town. We did not want to build another new one with a lot of expense, so the idea fell through and after that there was only the choice between Inuvik, Yellowknife and Fort Smith.

In respect of the Mackenzie delta, I was inclined to favour Inuvik, but I was not too sincere because as a member of the Northwest Territories council I just could not see Inuvik established as a capital. Some of my constituents did not like it too much. I worked for Fort Smith.

Mr. RHEAUME: You are in favour of that?

Mr. LANG: I am in favour of that. I have nothing against Yellowknife, but I cannot see the capital that far east. Fifteen years from now it may not be the town it is today.

Mr. NIELSEN: Do you favour the commissioner sitting as a voting member of the council as is proposed in the new legislation?

Mr. LANG: I think his advice is worth more than his votes. I think he will be a more effective commissioner if he can speak to the council as adviser.

Mr. NIELSEN: Do I take it from that that you are not in favour of his having the vote?

Mr. LANG: Maybe we are running into a conflict on a financial matter.

Mr. NIELSEN: No, we are not. In the Yukon he does not have a vote.

Mr. LANG: I would not be in favour of it; no. I think he can do a better job as an adviser to the council than as a voting member.

Mr. NIELSEN: Under the proposed legislation, jurisdiction for calling an election is placed in the hands of the commissioner absolutely. Do you feel the commissioner should have the absolute power to call elections, or do you think it should be upon consultation with the council?

Mr. LANG: I would be inclined to think he should consult the council on election matters.

Mr. NIELSEN: Do you think the territorial court of the new Mackenzie territory or Nunassiq territory should sit outside the new territories in any other province or area?

Mr. LANG: I do not think that possibility should be excluded, but as a general rule I think we should sit within the territory which we govern. However, we should not put down so strict a rule that we could not do this. Perhaps at some time some good might be accomplished by sitting outside.