

I believe it is not too late to improve this Accord to include aboriginal peoples and, as I said when I began, northern Canadians.

The federal Government has an opportunity to lead the way in convincing all provincial Premiers to make an historic gesture and, at long last, recognize the inherent right of our original peoples to self-government and to ensure that they be welcomed fully into the Canadian family as our original citizens, worthy of our respect, worthy of the friendship of their fellow citizens from one end of this country to another.

The purpose of my brief intervention is to urge the Government to listen to what the House has to say and to support the motion that was introduced by my colleague from Oshawa. We believe the amendment process should be more flexible along the lines I have suggested for admission of the two Territories should they eventually want to become full partners in our Confederation and to put onto the agenda of the recognized Constitution, the right of our aboriginal peoples to self-government and self-determination within the Canadian Confederation.

Those are two improvements I believe that could be made without in any way sacrificing the full purpose and intent of the constitutional Accord which, after all, is to bring Quebec fully into our Confederation politically, psychologically and emotionally. I believe that it merits the sincere and deep consideration of every Member of this House and, if we can look across the country, of members of our provincial legislatures who will have a duty, as we do, to seek improvements to this historic Accord.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) and ask him for his opinion, and I mean this in a totally non-partisan manner. British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Newfoundland came into Confederation without the unanimous consent or the consent of a number of provinces. I would like his view, and I mean this quite sincerely, on why it would be necessary at all to have even the consent of seven provinces if a Territory of Canada requests admission into Confederation as a province. Would he agree that that is an item of business between the federal Government and that Territory and no one else?

● (1710)

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I can say to my hon. friend from Saskatchewan, whom I have known for a long time, that while I recited the fact that historically the admission of a new province had been a bilateral matter between the then territorial concern and the federal Government or the self-governing dominion of Newfoundland, within the context of the 1982 Accord we had moved on to a more collective style of confederation. I would be satisfied if the seven provinces having 50 per cent of the population would be able to pronounce themselves upon the admission of either Territory. I think the necessary flexibility would exist and the

chances of either Territory becoming a province would be enhanced as a result.

Since the 1982 Accord, we have had an amending formula that we did not have before. When Newfoundland, the last province brought into Confederation, was brought in, there was no definition by the Supreme Court of Canada nor by the British North America Act as to what the amending process was. I would be satisfied with the 1982 arrangement which would be flexible enough to obtain what northerners are seeking.

**Mr. Benjamin:** But seven provinces can stop it.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I do not want to bind either leader of either Territory, but it is my understanding, after talking to each of them, that the arrangement I have put forward would be satisfactory to them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Since there are no more questions or comments, we will go on to debate.

**Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak today. I would like to review the progress the Government has made in promoting the political development of the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Self-government and political development in the north has been one of the most important foundations of the policy the Government has followed since its election. A great deal of progress has been made in transferring powers, programs and responsibilities of a type normally exercised by provincial Governments from the federal Government to the territorial Governments in the Northwest Territories and Yukon. The process is continuing and will continue to receive our unreserved support.

Our commitment to this course of action is based upon both principle and practicality. It is our belief that those providing public services should be as close as possible to the people being served. A better understanding of local conditions, a sensitivity to local aspirations and hence more accountability and improved services thus becomes possible.

I would like to outline some of the measures the Government has taken in support of northern political development. To begin with, formula financing for the territorial Governments was introduced in 1985. Under this system, about two-thirds of the funds required by the territorial Governments for the provision of public services are provided in the form of grants. In the current year, the Northwest Territories will receive \$465 million and the Yukon \$155 million under formula financing.

Before formula financing was introduced, grants were negotiated on an annual basis between the two levels of Government. This was a short-term approach that made long-term planning difficult and created some tensions between the federal Government and its territorial counterparts. Territorial Governments can now plan ahead with a predictable cash flow.