

Northwest Territory, and with its own Mackenzie territory government sitting at Fort Smith a far more efficient system than at present could be developed to deal with our biggest problem today which is finding work for our fast increasing native population, with the many youngsters who will be pouring out of our schools at a rapidly increasing rate in the near future.

These young people can evolve into our biggest future asset if we can manage to educate and train them to develop our enormous potential resources in the largely unknown pre-Cambrian Shield in the east and the equally unknown Rocky Mountain area in the west. In the Mackenzie Valley we have oil-bearing formations to a depth of 20,000 feet, extending north to a depth of 40,000 feet under some of the arctic islands.

So much for the Mackenzie territory.

As for the eastern section to Nunassiat, it will be slower developing. The population of close to 8,000 in an area of over 800,000 square miles, have not had the benefit of education like the people in the west; they got the franchise for the first time in the 1962 federal election. I feel they will benefit by the division. They will have an opportunity to elect two members out of a seven member territorial council with its home in Ottawa. This follows the same pattern as we went through in the west; and eventually it will lead to a fully elected council and provincial status, although it will be many years hence.

In my opinion we have a wonderful north country, and I sincerely hope we shall be able to develop it as fast as possible. I believe this can best be accomplished by going ahead with the proposed division as quickly as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Lang.

Mr. Lang understands and realizes that members may require additional information, and he has said that he would be happy to reply to any questions put by members of the committee.

Mr. TURNER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Lang one or two questions, and to say to him how grateful we are that he and his confrères have stayed over in Ottawa for the extra time in order to allow the committee to hear what they have to say about these two important pieces of legislation.

Mr. Lang, do I understand that the original impetus behind the idea of dividing the territory came from the north? Whose idea was it?

Mr. LANG: That is right, Mr. Chairman. I have been a resident in the delta for a little over 35 years, and I am very familiar with the natives in that country. For a number of years we have been discussing among ourselves what would eventually become of this north country. Many of the natives are raising families down there, and they are sometimes worried about what will happen in the future.

From those discussions there gradually evolved the idea that we could move faster if we were alone. We have far too big a territory. When I was elected as a member of the territorial council I found that, although the people in the east had nothing whatsoever to do with my election, I was supposed to attend to eastern affairs; and I did not know anything about the east and had very little opportunity to find out. I was very happy when we eventually had a meeting in the east, in Chesterfield Inlet. This was my first trip to the east. I felt strongly that I could not obtain sufficient information really to be responsible for their affairs. That brought up the idea—and I talked it over with people in the delta, and every man I saw was in favour—that a closer-to-home government was required; that it would be easier to reach a government sitting in Fort Smith than it would be to reach a government in Ottawa; and also that our territory was far too large for the facilities.

Mr. TURNER: Did you bring the matter up before the territories council?