

*Adjournment Debate*

For these reasons, I repeat my request that the Minister of Transport move expeditiously to reach a decision on this pressing matter with the aid of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald), so that the business of providing efficient public transit may proceed smoothly. Again, I ask: When can we expect a decision to be announced on federal financial assistance to public transit?

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Roy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I should like to congratulate the hon. member for having brought up, once again, that important matter concerning urban transit systems. I am sure several hon. members—and I notice the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) is here this evening—would also like to hear a statement on the participation of the federal government in the financing of urban transit systems. For lack of time, it is impossible for me to outline all the steps which have been taken to help the provinces, and indirectly the municipalities through the provinces, with the urban transit program. I therefore refer the hon. member to the statement I made on March 8 last on the official policy of the Department of Transport on urban transit.

[English]

In response to a question raised on June 2, 1977, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) stated that no further decision had yet been reached on the question of federal government assistance for urban transit projects. The province of Ontario has taken the position that the project for the expansion and improvement of Union Station in Toronto, otherwise known as the Toronto transportation terminal project, should be funded in part by the federal government. Of the estimated \$58 million cost of the project, the provincial government has determined to its satisfaction that it should contribute only \$26 million while the federal government should provide the remainder.

● (1800)

Federal ministers have met with the premier of Ontario and appropriate provincial ministers to discuss the Toronto transportation terminal project and federal officials have participated in the work of a committee which has responsibility to examine, plan and ultimately implement a number of measures which would permit the capacity of Union Station to be increased in order to provide for the growth of commuter services—that is, GO transit—over the next few years. The position taken by the federal government to date has been that it agrees in principle with the need for some improvement to Union Station, the trackage in its vicinity, and that it is prepared to consider participation to the extent that existing federal government programs may be applicable. There has not been any agreement to a particular proportion of the costs nor to any particular figure.

The GO transit services in the Toronto area provide effective transportation to the residents of those communities which they serve. The province of Ontario has done and is doing good work in the development of these services, which have an

[Mr. Philbrook.]

excellent reputation throughout North America. I must stress, however, that expansion at Union Station is required because of the expansion of these commuter services, which are the responsibility of the provincial government. At this time the details of the commuter program implementation have not been finalized by the government, as it wishes to consider how this program should relate to its role in the general area of urban transportation assistance and to its priorities in the light of fiscal restraint.

The question raised by the hon. member also applies to Montreal, Vancouver and all across this nation, and I hope we will deal with this important matter in the future.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS—NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—  
INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PROGRAMS TO  
DEVELOP POLITICAL AWARENESS OF NATIVES—GOVERNMENT  
POSITION

**Mr. J. R. Holmes (Lambton-Kent):** Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, April 28 of this year, at page 5062 of *Hansard*, I raised the very important issue of local government in the Northwest Territories. I have no intention of repeating the questions and responses on that particular date. However, it is quite obvious that the minister's response was self-explanatory and explained his lack of understanding regarding the issue of local government in the Northwest Territories.

Perhaps I could put the importance of that issue in its proper context by reading a Telex from the president of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, Michel Amarook, which was sent on March 30, 1977 to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Allmand). The Telex reads as follows:

The cancellation of this week's local government training workshop in Baker Lake points up once again the colonial mentality that dominates the government of the Northwest Territories.

It also reveals the territorial bureaucrats as the bumbling incompetents that they are.

We demand that the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories make public the documents and background information concerning the mandate of the territorial government to help develop political awareness among native people.

We would appreciate also a clear statement of policy from you on the rights of native people to self-determination. From the events over the weekend and during this week in Yellowknife, we can only conclude that the territorial executive is determined to hinder political development.

A statement by the settlement council of Baker Lake suggests that future responsibility for political development and local government training in Nunavut territory should be assumed by Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. If the funds can be made available to us, we will be only too glad to take on this responsibility.

We fully support the public statements that have been made by the settlement council of Baker Lake and by John Amagoalik, the director of land claims for Inuit Tapirisat.

This is just one simple, isolated incident of several with respect to the issue of local government in the Northwest Territories. I want to emphasize that there is a department of local government in the Northwest Territories. Let me quote from the employees' handbook some of the objectives of that department as follows:

To develop political and social awareness and administrative capability at the community level.