

*Yukon and Territorial Lands Act*

speaking on the amendment. I know he has not done much homework.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I would request the co-operation of the House. The hon. member is rising to speak on the motion, and every hon. member has the right to speak on this motion.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point I was trying to make is that if the hon. member can sit in this chamber and not even appreciate the fact that another hon. member is rising to speak on the motion, then we need more discussion so that members opposite will appreciate the purport of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Yukon. I sincerely believe that there is not a member across the way or on this side who believes that an elected council should be dissolved *ab initio*, with the stroke of a pen, just because there is a disagreement between the council and the commissioners. If this is the way in which the minister wishes to build up confidence in the government of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, then I am afraid that no matter how sincere he may be he is mistaken. As I said, this provision is archaic and ancient; it reflects against the good people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories because it will impede the development of self government in the north rather than enhance it, which is what the minister says he wishes to do.

For that reason, I have no hesitation at all in asking hon. members to find out what is involved in this debate. If the hon. member for Lafontaine (Mr. Lachance) does not appreciate when an hon. member speaks on Motion No. 2, then I hope he will take the time and make the effort to read the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Yukon to see whether he agrees to an elected body being chopped off tomorrow with a stroke of a pen by the Governor in Council, which is the cabinet in Ottawa. If he says he thinks that will enhance confidence in the minister's stewardship of the activities in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, then I will not accept that because I have a higher opinion than that of the hon. member.

There is not a member of this House who would like to see the House of Commons and the House of Lords in England and the so-called Governor in Council over there—if the BNA Act were so construed, and perhaps at some time it was—completely disregard this House. So far as Nova Scotia is concerned such an act did exist in connection with the

[Mr. Nowlan.]

old legislative council, the old imperial governor in council, whereby such a thing was possible. As my friend the hon. member for Yukon says, this is just a travesty carried on in history. I would have hoped that in the revision of this bill the minister might have rid us of such a sterile section because history indicates that even 100 years ago legislative councils were upended if their action did not conform to popular will. This is just what this provision is trying to do.

I hope that hon. members will give serious consideration to such a reasonable amendment. All it is asking is that we remove from the Governor in Council the supreme power to completely castrate the efforts and work of the council. The minister explained his dilemma by posing a hypothetical situation in which the council and the commissioners might be at loggerheads and the government in the north might break down. I come back to what the hon. member for Yukon suggested, that the minister can bring in his amendment to take care of that situation at that time. There is no necessity to maintain a provision which is so stupid it has not been used as yet. If we are going to make stupid laws in the House, it is no wonder that the people in this country really wonder what goes on here.

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It seems to me that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) has begun to slip back to the paternalistic attitude that has always been held by the Indian section of the branch, the paternalistic attitude toward government itself, particularly in the Northwest Territories. Here we have a situation where the movement in the Territories is toward self-government. This will come about slowly and gradually. This bill is a step in the right direction and there is some hope that eventually the council will run the affairs of the Territories completely and that they will have something in the nature of provincial status. If there is to be a council of the Territories, I cannot understand where there is any logic in retaining in Ottawa, in the bureaucracy here so many miles away from the north, the right to decide, when there is a quarrel going on in the Territories, that the people there cannot settle it themselves. If that is the attitude, then what is the point of the whole exercise? I grant you that there must be a power to dissolve a council, a legislature, or a Parliament.