

*Supply—Indian Affairs*

I ask the minister to take particular cognizance of another recommendations of the Carrothers commission, namely that with respect to the status and salary of the new commissioner. The Carrothers commission recommended that the commissioner hold the rank of a full deputy minister and that he be responsible directly to the minister of northern affairs. It is with a little concern that I learned that the newly appointed Commissioner for the Yukon is receiving a salary which, while adequate, places him much below the level of deputy minister in the hierarchy of the civil service. I think all of us recognize that salary is an important item not only in terms of money but status. If the commissioner for the Northwest Territories is to have status in the eyes of his colleagues, I suggest that the minister appoint him with the rank of deputy minister and at that salary level.

The Carrothers commission report has been received in some parts of the north with a certain amount of disappointment. I think this is particularly so in the case of Fort Smith because that community hoped and anticipated for many years that they could and would be the capital of the territories. The Carrothers commission recommendation is that the capital be Yellowknife. I suggest that in the main the northern people are excited by the report, but they are also anxious that some of the recommendations be implemented as soon as possible and that there be a development of the process of self-government for the Northwest Territories.

I was in the territories in the last two or three weeks and was fortunate enough to attend the opening of the Northwest Territories Council session at Resolute Bay, approximately 2,300 miles north of Ottawa, located on Cornwallis Island. It was the first session of the territorial council where elected representatives from all parts of the territories were in attendance. I can assure hon. members that a great tribute was paid to the House of Commons by the newly elected members as well as those who had been elected for some time. The members of the council expressed their appreciation of the amendments to the Northwest Territories Act which extended the franchise throughout the Northwest Territories on a territorial basis.

However, the council members almost unanimously expressed concern with regard to the implementation of those features of the

Carrothers commission report which the government of Canada and themselves are prepared to accept. They are concerned that it will take an undue length of time to bring into effect those recommendations which are meaningful. The expression has been used that Carrothers, referring to the commission, is in danger of being buried. This is the feeling not only of the council but of many people in all parts of the territories.

I should like to make a suggestion to the minister which I think would help speed up the implementation of the recommendations of the Carrothers commission report. Part of the problem is that in April, 1967, the life of the present council will expire and there will be an election throughout the territories. The council's life is normally three years. I suggest to the minister that the life of the present council be extended one year, thereby permitting his department and officers to study the recommendations of the Carrothers commission, together with the recommendations of the territorial council and the departmental officers. These recommendations could then be brought together so that we in this house could enact the enabling legislation some time within the next year.

I think all of us recognize that because of the mechanics involved it would be virtually impossible to bring forward by next spring sweeping changes suitable to the people in the north, the council, the minister, his department and this house. The task is too great. By extending the life of the council one year, these recommendations could be tidied up and brought before the House of Commons, thereby permitting the new council with its increased responsibilities and functions to come into existence in April, 1968. Otherwise I cannot see that the council will have a new face and a new meaning until 1970. I hope the minister understands that those of us who live in the north cannot wait that long.

I recognize that to effect the suggestion I have made would involve a minor amendment to the Northwest Territories Act. I feel confident that hon. members who sit on the opposite side of the house, particularly those who are members of the northern affairs committee and have spent some time in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, would be prepared to have this amendment brought forward and dealt with as quickly as possible.

I should like to impress upon the minister the recommendations of the Carrothers commission with regard to the executive council. I have some sympathy with what has already