

Yukon and N.W.T. Government

Having defined some of the difficulties in moving as quickly as some of the people in the Yukon would like the government to move, the minister did take some steps toward closing the gap between what the government hopes reasonably and logically will be an orderly and progressive development and the goals that the people of the Yukon have in mind as delineated by the hon. member this morning. The minister made some announcements of government policy which will eventually find its way into legislation. I know hon. members are aware of these announcements but perhaps I should put them on the record of *Hansard*. He said that legislation would be adopted to set up an executive committee. Perhaps the hon. member is not satisfied with the type of executive committee envisaged. His reason for dissatisfaction may be that it should have more, or less power. In any event, this is a move to transfer executive power.

Mr. Nielsen: They are still civil servants.

Mr. Honey: The minister then said, and I think this is important:

I am hopeful that we can develop still more effective ways to extend local responsibility over matters which will affect the quality of life in the Yukon, to cover executive as well as the existing legislative powers. I will be seeking your support and co-operation—

This is the way we do things in this country, by co-operation and consultation. He then said:

I will be seeking your support and co-operation, therefore, in considering what additional changes can be made to give you greater territorial responsibility in the light of the experience gained from this first important step.

He did not close the door or bar the gate in respect of considering what additional changes might be made to give greater territorial responsibility in light of experience gained from this first step. The minister mentioned several other matters which would be included in the legislation, particularly the lowering of the voting age for territorial elections and the extension of the life of the Territorial Council—

Mr. Nielsen: Should we not be entitled to pass that sort of thing ourselves?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The parliamentary secretary has the floor. Unfortunately, his time has now expired. Perhaps we could ascertain whether there is unanimous consent to allowing him to continue.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Mr. Honey.]

Mr. Honey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. member has a question, perhaps I should accept it now and then try to be brief.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I should just like to ask the hon. member whether we should not be allowed, through our elected representatives in the Yukon, to set the voting age of those people who vote and elect the representatives forming the council.

Mr. Honey: That is a matter of personal opinion. I heard the remarks of the hon. member for Northwest Territories that he would make representations to the government, as I am sure the hon. member for Yukon will. The minister is not fixing the voting age, or anything definite; he has indicated an intention to do these things. Let me finish very quickly by putting these matters on the record. He said that it was intended—

—to extend the life of the Territorial Council to four years instead of the present three years; to permit the Council to set the indemnity of its members and to reduce the period of federal disallowance of territorial ordinances from two years to one year.

Then the minister in his closing remarks asked for co-operation and consultation. I will not take the time to read the whole of his remarks, but they were very much in line with the closing remarks of the hon. member for Yukon this morning. I want to refer to what the hon. member for Yukon said about the spirit in which we should approach this problem of constitutional involvement. This was his final plea for a gradual evolution of decision-making control from the bureaucrats to the elected council members. He then referred to the council members as being responsible, intelligent individuals who have the responsibility to make decisions. I agree with that, but from my observations it is not much different from what the minister said. We have from the minister a request for co-operation and consultation, and we have essentially the same thing from the hon. member for Yukon.

In closing let me say I am pleased the hon. member has moved drastically from the exact words of the resolution. Let me close on this theme. The previous Prime Minister and leader of my party referred to a particular party as "Liberals in a hurry". I think my hon. friend and the people he represents are moving in a bit of a hurry in their quest for self-government. I think the federal government has to take a balanced, rational, responsible position. I hope, and am sure, this will