

the Chair so that a determination may be made that the proposed amendment of the hon. member is in order.

• (1740)

Mr. Symes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters):

That the subject matter of motion No. 13 be referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development for further study and that the committee be authorized to travel to the Yukon and Northwest Territories to hear witnesses.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The Chair has received the amendment. There is some question as to whether this is in fact a substantive motion and whether it can be put to the House. I would suggest that the House permit the Chair to reserve judgment and that we proceed with the debate. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mrs. Campagnolo).

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the motion of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) I must first of all thank him for his very kind personal remarks. I look forward to visiting in the very near future the territory which he so eloquently represents.

I find myself in great sympathy with the hon. member's point of view. Indeed, I even believe it is safe to say that the great majority of Canadian people would like to look with favour on the main thrust of the motion, that is, that the government establish a fully representative and responsible system of government in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

It is a matter of record that the two territories are at different stages of development. In fact a newspaper report of a recent committee hearing stated that a councillor of the Yukon said that they resent being lumped with the Northwest Territories, and that they resent being mentioned in the same breath as the Northwest Territories. So I believe it is safe to say that the motion as introduced may have some shortcomings in combining Canada's two northern territories, even if the desire is to create two separate political entities. It will be necessary during my remarks to differentiate at times between the two very different northern territories.

The second premise of the motion is that implementation be immediate. It is here that I come to the issue which must be dealt with, Mr. Speaker. The government's policy in this matter has been clearly stated and effectively carried out. A national objective for northern development, announced in 1972, is to further the evolution of government in the northern territories. It is true that the concepts of representative and responsible government should be implemented on a gradual basis and at a pace suitable to the wishes and desires of northern residents, thus taking into account the ever increasing interest, participation and involvement of native northerners in government at all recognized levels.

The Territories

It has been stated by the former minister, who is now the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Chrétien), that he did not see the designation of the two great northern territories to provincial status in the "near future". The government recognizes, however, the ever-quickening pulse of activities in the north and it could well be that acceleration of the long term view, at least in relation to the Yukon, could result from new development in that territory.

There is no doubt in my mind that there are some questionable benefits of provincehood, and I should like to bring these to the attention of the House. As my constituency shares a boundary with that of my good friend, the hon. member for the Yukon, I recently attended a meeting of the Yukon and British Columbia Chamber of Mines. In the course of this a grateful Yukon miner proposed a toast to the continued good health of our British Columbia Premier, Mr. Barrett, who was responsible for an upsurge in the Yukon economy by increasing resource royalties to the point where mining companies are moving out of my area into the more hospitable surroundings of the territory to the north. These closures have wreaked hardship on the people of my area, as miners and their families face the very personal disruption of unemployment and an uncertain future. In some cases the Yukon has been the unintended beneficiary of the vagaries of provincial politics in their southern neighbouring province.

In the territories we have a huge sprawling world that in many ways is significantly different from the narrow southern band of major population centres in Canada. A giant mountain range provides a natural barrier between the two territories. Geography is a major problem as well, in terms of distance. There are also varying degrees of administrative experience, of population, of tax bases and of economics.

Mr. Nielsen: They drink more, too.

Mrs. Campagnolo: I guess they do. When you stop to consider that the population of the Yukon is approximately 20,000 people, the size of an ordinary town in the lower part of Canada, and that of its giant neighbour, the Northwest Territories, is 36,000 people, you get some idea of the difficulties in considering full constitutional status for the lands in question. I submit that the government of Canada is responsible to the nation as a whole as well as to the territories and I further submit, Mr. Speaker, that the nation as a whole cannot cede control of 40 per cent of the entire resource inventory of Canada to one-quarter of 1 per cent of the population of the country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Symes: What about Alberta?

Mrs. Campagnolo: The motion was prepared for the twenty-ninth parliament, I understand, and does not take into consideration recent amendments to the Yukon and Northwest Territories Acts as enacted by parliament in April, 1974, which, *inter alia*, provide for a fully