

If the division goes through as proposed, we will have Mackenzie Territory in the west with close to 500,000 square miles of territory and about 16,000 inhabitants, and Nunassiq in the east with a little more than 800,000 square miles and about 8,000 people.

I may state here that the four elected members of the council now before you are well qualified to speak for the people in the north, as we have over 140 years of permanent residence in Northwest Territory between us, and the welfare of its people is a matter of great concern to us.

Personally, I am a resident of Mackenzie Delta of 35 years standing. The north is my home, and I sincerely believe this division is the logical move to make. I feel we are ready to take this step towards a closer-to-home form of government, with a commissioner for the new Mackenzie Territory sitting permanently in Fort Smith.

I can truthfully state that not one single protest against this division has yet come to my notice in my constituency of Mackenzie Delta with its close to 4,000 inhabitants. As for the rest of the territory, the only opposition appears to be a rather small but well organized section of mining interests in the south-east, whose main objection seems to be based on a fear of higher taxation.

I shall go over some of the main reasons for division.

We have in the west a population of approximately 16,000 with about 60% natives; in the Delta we have as high as 86% natives. All these natives have had at least a hundred years or more of contact with the white race. Most of them can speak English, and many of them can hold their own in competition with the whites. In the Delta all three races, Eskimo, Indian and white live harmoniously together, and racial friction is practically non-existent. In the east most natives still live in a very primitive state and most of them are still illiterate.

The west feels that the east is holding it back. In the west the people take keen interest in elections and vote intelligently. They are very anxious to create a fifth constituency which would result in a new Mackenzie territorial council with five elected and four appointed members, which will give residents a stronger voice in territorial matters.

We also hope that the new Mackenzie territory government can take over most of the civil service and absorb some of our own girls and boys in various jobs as they leave our schools, and they will be graduating in great numbers in the next few years.

Another hope is that the Mackenzie territory government will be able to integrate welfare and housing under one authority instead of three as at present. This will mean a grant from Indian Affairs for Indians and a grant from Northern Affairs for Eskimos, but it should be well worth the effort and should contribute greatly towards eliminating petty grievances among the ethnic groups.

Banks and Victoria Islands are included in the new Mackenzie territory. The natives on those islands have expressed themselves strongly as wanting to join the west. From the very beginning these islands were supplied with groceries by the Hudson Bay Company from the west, and their outlook is strongly western. The natives own considerable equipment in the form of small schooners. Many of their children go to school in Inuvik. Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island gets its mail from Norman Wells; the air distance is less than that between the Wells and Inuvik. All heavy freight and supplies go in by water from the west, most of it via Mackenzie River and Tuktoyaktuk.

We realize that for many years yet Mackenzie territory will require federal help as at present, but with the roads to Slave Lake and Yellowknife now in operation and the railroad to Pine Point nearing completion, Mackenzie territory will develop much faster as a separate unit than it could as part of