

*Yukon and Northwest Territories*

decided by one person, the Commissioner. Mr. Speaker, I should amend that and say they are decided probably by two people, because I assume the minister has the final say on that kind of expenditure.

**Mr. Chrétien:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the hon. member would want to mislead the House. All the questions he is putting to the House today concerning Northern Affairs can be asked in a committee of the House when dealing with the estimates of the department. The same questions could be asked by all elected members of the council when they are studying the estimates of the different departments in the Northwest Territories. The elected representatives of the Northwest Territories, both in the Council and in the House of Commons, have plenty of opportunities to ask the same questions. I know the hon. member does not want to create the impression that nobody knows about these things, or that there is some mystery about those expenditures.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Obviously, this is a question that could be dealt with by the minister if he wishes to speak when concluding second reading. It is not really a question on which to interrupt another hon. member's speech.

**Mr. Orlikow:** Mr. Speaker, of course they can ask questions, and I presume they will get information. The important thing to me is not whether they can ask questions about it, but whether they can do anything about it. For example, can they say to the Commissioner, "You cannot spend \$100,000, or whatever it is, for the Commissioner's Ball. We think it should be spent somewhere else." The minister shakes his head, but to my knowledge they have never done that, and have never attempted to do it. The minister says that we can get the answers to questions. I am glad he said that, because he anticipated a question I am now going to raise. I talked about the difference between the standard of living of the white people in the Northwest Territories and the standard of living of the native population. I gave a few figures. One of the largest employers, in fact the largest in the Northwest Territories, is government, both the government of Canada through its various departments, and the territorial government. I am told that in the past ten years the number of public servants working in the Northwest Territories has almost tripled.

My colleague, the hon. member for Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth), put some questions on the order paper last session. The hon. member put the questions on the order paper when this session began. He wanted to know then, and still wants to know, how many people work for the territorial government and for the federal government in the Northwest Territories in each of a number of categories, and of that number how many are native people? The minister's department has that information but has not answered the questions. Why? Probably it is because the minister would be embarrassed to tell this House and the country how small the number of native people is who work for the government of Canada and for the territorial council, and how poor the jobs are in terms of status and salary.

[Mr. Orlikow.]

● (1650)

**Mr. Chrétien:** This information has been given in committees.

**Mr. Orlikow:** That may be true, but not to my knowledge. I wonder why there should be a delay of almost five months in getting answers to questions put on the order paper by the hon. member for the Northwest Territories? If the minister has the information why does he not give it in the regular way?

Mr. Speaker, the best jobs have been reserved for white people, most of whom come from southern Canada. That is equally true or even more so, of housing. It is difficult to get people to work in the high Arctic, so the government of Canada has provided a special program of housing for federal civil servants who work in the north. People who come from southern Canada are provided with rental housing, with electric power, with running water and so on, where it is possible, at a subsidized rate. All housing in the high Arctic, of course, is subsidized. There are practically no native people, even those working for the government of Canada or the territorial government, living in that kind of housing. Why is that? It is because the regulation only provides for that kind of housing for people not living in their home community.

**An hon. Member:** Where is the hon. member for the Northwest Territories?

**Mr. Orlikow:** He is right here. If you get a job with the federal government in your own community, you do not qualify for housing. I cannot think of anything, either by accident or by deliberate policy, which would discourage the native people from working for the federal government more than that kind of provision. Native people are simply not permitted to work for the government.

I want to deal for a few moments with the basic issue as I see it. That is, despite the complete election of the territorial councils by the people who are eligible to vote, the real power will still rest with two people, the commissioner of each territory and the minister. The commissioner, I presume with the approval of the minister, makes every decision that is important. Speaking for myself, I do not believe that the two territories are ready for provincial status at this time in any case. Certainly, not in their ability to finance their own necessary government operations.

**Mr. Nielsen:** What government does?

**Mr. Orlikow:** Very few, that is true. I do not believe that the time has yet come when either territory is ready for provincial status. That may be true—

**Mr. Nielsen:** Why not?

**Mr. Orlikow:**—and it may be true that the final authority on budget and expenditures must still be this parliament on the recommendation of the minister. It may still be true that this parliament and the government, through the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development must decide how much money will be allocated for housing, for the building of roads, for education and so on. I want to say to the Minister that in my time in public life I