

give you a tour which will leave you with a sick feeling in your stomach. I know it gives me that feeling. Along with anger and frustration because nobody is doing anything about it.

I understand you are a sensitive person and one that cares for the native people. It is for these reasons, I am writing this letter in the hope you will use your influence to do something about this tragic situation.

Yours sincerely,  
L. H. Thompson, M.S.W.  
Frobisher Bay, N.W.T.

Mr. Speaker, I can vouch for the accuracy of these statements. I made my rounds to almost every home in Frobisher and everything the writer has to say is true. There is even a lot more to tell. Therefore, I ask that funds be made available as soon as possible to the Northwest Territories government for the implementation of their housing program.

Regarding the Local Initiatives Program, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the rules leave a lot to be desired, especially where the program pertains to the Northwest Territories. The cut-off date of May 31 is totally unrealistic for the north. I should like to see some allowance made for the fact that many programs cannot be started there until after breakup, usually at the end of May. Ice on the rivers and lakes prevents such projects as airstrips for communities and docking facilities from getting under way. I think this matter should be given consideration.

Another topic that has been making the news almost every fall in the Northwest Territories and many other parts of the country is the matter of search and rescue, a very important topic indeed. Millions of dollars have been spent in years past in searches for lost aircraft, particularly in the Northwest Territories. These millions have been spent in many ways looking for people who were lost. I think a lot of that is rather foolish. It should not be necessary to spend millions of dollars in searches if the money were spent properly in the first place to provide navigational aids, good weather reporting—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Firth:** These searches would not be necessary if such services were provided. I know whereof I speak because I have flown commercially in the Northwest Territories for a few years. The flying industry is very important to the people of the Northwest Territories because of the vastness of the country and the lack of roads. We accept aircraft as a means of transportation to a greater extent than most people in other parts of this country. But we do not have sufficient navigational aids or sufficient good weather reporting stations, Mr. Speaker. This situation must not be allowed to continue. We are losing too many lives and losing a lot of the taxpayers' money on searches instead of using it to prevent people and planes from getting lost in the first place.

Another program which would prevent aircraft and people from being lost in the Northwest Territories is in the area of pilot training. I suggest that we could use a good pilot training program in the Northwest Territories through which the native people in that part of the world could be used. I think it has been proven that this would work because of the success of the native pilots we have

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up there already. The program would not cost too much money as it could be run as a student loan program where some of the money is recovered when the trainee goes to work as a commercial pilot, an aircraft mechanic or mechanic pilot. This is something that should be looked into very soon, Mr. Speaker, as the program we have at the moment is not working out.

To fill another need in the north, a trappers assistance program should be initiated as soon as possible. The trapping industry could be a big industry, as it was before, but certain events have taken the trapper away from his trap lines, such as the building of the DEW Line which provided high wages at a time of depressed fur prices. Fur prices are good now and game is available, but there is no program to help the trapper get back on the trap line. I suggest that the cost to outfit one trapper and help him get back to the trapline would be in the neighbourhood of \$3,000 to \$4,000. I suggest that some sort of trappers' loan program should be set up to help these people who are unemployed in the Northwest Territories.

Reverting to the subject of roads and highways, Mr. Speaker, I should like to mention the need for a highway in northern Alberta. This is not part of my constituency but such a highway would tie in with the Mackenzie highway system.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Firth:** The road that I am talking about would benefit the towns of Fort McMurray, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Smith, Pine Point, Hay River and that area. The road would be an all-weather highway from Fort McMurray to Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith. It would, as I say, tie in with the Mackenzie Highway system. There is a great need for this road. I do not think it would be difficult to do, and ought to be done as soon as possible. I think it would be a wise move if either the Alberta government or the federal government were to build that road, since it would help to bring down the high cost of living in certain areas and also contribute to the tourist industry.

• (1740)

To sum up my remarks, Mr. Speaker, what I should like to see done for the Northwest Territories and its people is as follows: I should like to see the aboriginal rights and land claims of the native peoples of that part of the country settled. As I said earlier, this is important and in the next few days I hope to be introducing bills on this subject. Then, I should like to see one or two more constituencies created in the Northwest Territories so that the area could be represented by two or possibly three Members of Parliament. Finally, I should like the government to consider giving us more responsibility in governing our own affairs by replacing our colonial type of administration with a fully elected territorial council.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Firth:** Then, we could move forward to a well planned, orderly, industrial, social and economic development of the Northwest Territories and, possibly, to provincial status.