

*Northwest Territories Act*

ernment, a chance to express their views on those matters which are territorial in nature. At the present time the council of the Northwest Territories consists of nine members, together with a Commissioner. The Commissioner is appointed and sits with the council during its deliberations. We have heard during the earlier discussions that five of these members are appointed by the government of Canada. One member is the deputy commissioner who acts in every respect in the absence of the Commissioner.

It is only in recent years, Mr. Speaker, that there have been elected representatives on the Northwest Territories council. The first elected representative sat in 1952. In 1954 the number of elected representatives on the council was increased from one to four. This is how we know the council today. The proposal before us now is to add three additional elected representatives from the constituencies comprising the central Arctic, Keewatin and Franklin. It may be argued that this will give the elected representatives a majority on the council and thus greater control over their own affairs.

During the course of the evening we have heard discussion regarding the appointed members of the Northwest Territories council. Putting other considerations aside for one moment, I think I should mention the contribution which has been made to northern Canada by persons who have been appointed to the territorial council by the various governments of Canada. I could refer to our present Minister of Industry (Mr. Drury), who at one time was an appointed member of council. I could refer to the publisher of the *Ottawa Journal*. These people have served on the council at their own expense. They were not paid an honorarium, but were paid their expenses. They have served, at times at great inconvenience to themselves, and on all occasions have exhibited a deep and abiding concern for the people and the resources of the north. I think I would be wrong if I did not mention the contribution the appointed members have made to the growth of the Northwest Territories.

The north is changing, and changing rapidly, with the increase in communications systems and the tremendous resource development which has taken place. As a result of the government's development program, the northern residents have been offered the same opportunity for education, health, welfare and economic development that their

[Mr. Orange.]

cousins in southern Canada have. There is a genuine desire in the north on the part of the people to have a greater expression in the management of their own affairs. The northern people want and demand more political autonomy. They want to have greater participation in their own government, more say in the determination of local territorial policy. To this end, I believe the advisory commission on government in the north, better known as the Carrothers commission which during the past year has asked northerners their views on the type of government they believe they could have, will be presenting its report. I was a little concerned this evening when I heard some reference to the fact the Carrothers commission may not adequately represent the views of the people of the north when that report is presented to the government.

I have a great deal of faith in the ability and integrity of the people who were appointed to this commission. I believe, as a result of watching from a distance, the kind of interest and concern that they have shown in the Northwest Territories, the members of this commission will present to the government the consolidated views of the people of the Northwest Territories. It may be that as a result of their deliberations amongst themselves, they will not properly present those views. However, I have confidence in the people of the north to express themselves if and when the Carrothers Commission does not do an adequate job. It is for this reason, so far as the Northwest Territories Act is concerned, I think we must look to the amendments before us as housekeeping amendments. The only exception is the proposal to extend the territorial franchise to the eastern Arctic.

● (9:20 p.m.)

It is because this measure is intended to give the only group of people in North America who do not have the right of self-government, a vote in an election, provincial, federal or state, that I would hope the members of this house would accept the bill with the greatest possible dispatch. I say this because the life of the present Northwest Territories council expires in March, 1967. Between now and that time, there will be a minimum of two council sessions. I hope that as a result of these amendments by-elections will be held at the earliest possible date, thus permitting representatives from the eastern Arctic to sit on the council for the balance of