

and his staff in the new capital. In addition, plans have been announced for the transfer from federal to territorial control of the operational responsibility for the existing government services as quickly as the new territorial administration can assume these functions. This transfer is expected to take approximately two years in the Mackenzie District and somewhat longer in the Eastern Arctic where communications and other circumstances dictate a slower pace. Other recommendations made by the Commission are still under consideration.

**Changes in Territorial Administration.**—Unlike the Yukon Territory which has had its own public service since the turn of the century, the Government of the Northwest Territories, until recently, has been largely dependent upon the Federal Government for staff to implement its legislation and to operate its public services. This arrangement was dictated by circumstances as they existed after World War II. The Federal Government had a direct responsibility for the education and welfare of the large Indian and Eskimo populations and for the operation and support of the Territorial Government. Until 1963, the Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs (now Indian Affairs and Northern Development) was Commissioner, and the Northern Administration Branch of this Department was devoted to operating most government services in the Northwest Territories with federal public servants. This arrangement worked well, for the Deputy Minister could ensure that his wishes as Commissioner and those of his Council were carried out and that both the Department and the Territorial Government worked in unison.

In 1963, a full-time Commissioner was appointed and charged with building up a territorial administration located initially in Ottawa but to move into the Territories as soon as possible. A full-time Deputy Commissioner was appointed in 1965 and a territorial staff was gradually built up to administer the territorial finances and to conduct the Council sessions. Following the designation of the seat of government in the Territories, the Commissioner and his staff of about 50 territorial public servants moved to Yellowknife in September 1967. On arrival there, the Commissioner assumed full responsibility for the operation of the liquor system, which was already staffed by territorial contract employees, and for the game management service, for municipal affairs and for the issuing of all licences and the collecting of taxes. The schools, welfare, engineering and other administrative services continue to be operated by federal staff until they can be transferred to territorial status on a planned basis. The new resident Territorial Government is structured to carry out its administration through six main departments, each under the direction of a senior public servant reporting to the Deputy Commissioner.

**Present Government Structure.**—The Northwest Territories Act, 1952, as amended, provides for an executive, legislative and judicial structure. The Commissioner is the chief executive officer. He is appointed by the Federal Government and is responsible for the administration of the Territories under the effective direction of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In practice, all major policy decisions are taken on the advice of his Council and the Commissioner can spend funds only to the extent voted by Council. New revenue measures are subject to the approval of Council. Normally, the Commissioner obtains prior federal approval of proposed legislative and budgetary measures before submitting them to Council. There is a Deputy Commissioner who can act for the Commissioner in his absence and is the effective head of the territorial administration. Government services at the local level are still provided mainly by federal staff who are gradually being transferred to territorial status.

The Legislative Council of seven elected and five appointed members has a life of three years. It meets at least twice each year, usually in February and November, but other sessions can be convened by the Commissioner as required. The Commissioner presides over Council in Session and the Deputy Commissioner sits as an appointed member. Main sessions last three to five weeks. A Clerk of Council and a Legal Adviser provide the main administrative assistance and debates are recorded verbatim.