

The Budget—Mr. Simpson

been provided. Yet four miles away we have \$2 million being spent under the federal government special projects program. It is hoped that additional houses will be built next year, though these too will not be serviced by sewers and water.

I think this situation is ridiculous. Five houses were built at the Métis settlement of Big Eddy, and again there will be no sewers or water. When representatives of these people met with the town authorities at The Pas, with the Premier of the province and others, they came away from the meeting with the answer that no provision was made for them in the special area grants. I think this sort of thing is false economy. The federal government is giving this money to the provinces. If the provinces are deciding how the money shall be spent, then I think the federal government should take a second look to make sure that their contribution is being spent economically and wisely.

This may not seem important to the House, but these three small Métis communities adjacent to The Pas are faced with a situation whereby they will have to go to the province next year and in future years to request that they be considered for the new program of Métis housing. They may be provided with a few houses in due course, but I feel money should now be made available for them under the special areas program. When new houses are built sewers and water should be supplied to enable these people to enjoy the amenities of life along with other Canadians. It is bad enough having people living in slum conditions in these areas, without having new houses built at a slow pace with no sewer and water facilities.

I have other criticisms of this special areas program, but before I refer to them I should like to congratulate the provinces of Newfoundland and New Brunswick on the agreements that have been signed with the federal government in relation to this particular project. I have mentioned that only one area of Manitoba benefits to the tune of \$2.2 million. The latest information, released today, is that an agreement has been signed between the federal government and the government of New Brunswick under the special areas program covering the amount of \$62 million. Again wonder whether this is further evidence of the neglect of western Canada.

I notice that the federal funds committed for the present fiscal year to March 31, 1971, comprise \$22.7 million in grants and \$9.8 million in loans, and the remainder of the \$62

million covering work to be completed by June, 1972, consists of a ceiling for additional federal payments of \$18.1 million in grants and \$11.5 million in loans. The agreement covers projects in the special areas of Saint John and Moncton, together with highway construction in a number of other areas of the province.

I am sure that the people of New Brunswick will be very happy with this expenditure. As far as the \$2.2 million to be spent in Manitoba is concerned, there is no stipulation to my knowledge that any of it will be spent on highway construction, which the federal government has always told me was the responsibility of the provincial government.

• (5:40 p.m.)

As I have said, for many years we have been pressing for a road to Churchill. This is a very desirable project. This could be an extension of the road from Thompson, Manitoba. I mentioned this matter during the past two sessions of Parliament. Every time I approached the federal authorities on this subject I was told that provincial roads are the responsibility of the particular province. As members know, at one time we had a very desirable program called the roads to resources program. Under this program the federal government co-operated with the provinces and provided financing in respect of roads that were necessary for the development of an area. The predecessor of this government, however, saw fit to discontinue that program. Since that time the western provinces particularly, and I suppose all provinces, have found it very difficult to even consider building the very necessary roads into their more remote northern areas.

If we are ever to develop the northern parts of our country—I am not referring only to the Northwest Territories and the Arctic area—we must have more co-operation and assistance on the part of the federal government. In respect of the special areas program I should also like to mention that an agreement has been reached between the federal government and the government of the province of Newfoundland wherein \$82 million will be made available to that province under this program.

The moneys are to be spent in much the same way as they were spent in respect of the other program I mentioned. There is to be \$31 million in grants and \$10.2 million in loans up to March 31, 1971. The remainder of the work is to be completed by June 30, 1972,

[Mr. Simpson.]