

Adjournment Debate

cent of the bands had to make use of CMHC because the funding provided by DIAND was not sufficient.

In order to increase the efficiency of services to bands, some suggested to the committee that the housing programs between DIAND and CMHC be amalgamated. Here we have two government departments asking to be put together to become more efficient. That is not the way the bureaucracy has worked in this country, unfortunately.

In fact, DIAND has no clear statement of federal responsibility with respect to housing for natives living on reserve. Because of this and because of the patchwork of programs among governments, the committee found that the natives living on reserves, which were side by side, could in fact have completely different levels of housing and services.

A very clear message was being delivered to the committee. There are serious problems in the administration of the housing service between various governments and between various government departments.

I conclude by restating what we in the Reform Party believe is the root problem of the deplorable housing conditions that exist on some of the reserves. It is not the fact that they need more money spent. It is not the fact that there is money to be spent because there is not. We have to borrow it on a daily basis to stay alive in this country. The fact is that the money they have, which is adequate, is simply not being used in an effective and efficient manner.

I repeat again, their programs are out of control. Their spending is out of control. There is no monitoring within that department. There is no accountability and quite frankly under this government, we see also there can be no hope for that department to ever get its act together.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: Since no one wishes to take the floor, can we call it 6.30 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

GRAIN TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Crow debate has been with us for some time. It is an important debate that has a great deal of meaning for thousands of prairie farmers. It is a debate that these thousands of farmers want to be a part of. In fact, these farmers have already demonstrated that when asked they are more than prepared to participate in the debate.

For example, when the previous government talked about changing the Crow benefit they hosted hundreds of regional and community meetings across the prairies. These meetings were promoted as transportation talks. They attracted hundreds of participants. In almost every case across Saskatchewan the response of those participants was to ask the federal government to maintain the Crow benefit.

Farmers across the prairies time and time again have impressed upon the federal government that the Crow represents economic fairness in the transportation of grain destined for export. Saskatchewan farmers in particular are producing grain on land that is further from port than any other grain farmers in the world. Since the price of the product is based on its port side distribution, obviously the farther one is from port the more uncompetitive the product is for sale to the rest of the world.

The Crow benefit simply recognizes that with the benefit all Canadians receive from the sale of Canadian grain into overseas markets, all Canadians will assist in the cost of getting that grain to its port of sale. Without the national subsidy, and I would argue it is an internal not an external subsidy, the revenue that would return to the prairies from the sale of grains would be much reduced. The cost of the loss of this transportation support to the prairies is therefore likely to be greater than the savings the Department of Transport and the federal government would accrue from the dismantling of the Crow benefit.

The Minister of Transport has toyed with prairie farmers about this issue for months. Last week he betrayed a long held Liberal commitment to prairie farmers and the communities that they support when he announced that it is no longer a question of whether the federal government plans to change the method of payment, it is only a question of how it will be changed.