

*Adjournment Debate*

Canada pension plan rates have had a tremendous impact on the mining sector because it is capital intensive and also uses a lot of labour.

• (1835)

I believe the various governments sat down in November 1994 and signed an agreement, the Whitehorse mining initiative. I will read one section of that concerning the area of taxation: "to establish a tax regime that is seen to be simple, pragmatic, fair, including an overall greater reliance on profit-based taxes as opposed to non-profit-related taxes and charges". I think this is a great objective. This agreement has been signed not only by our Minister of Natural Resources but most of the provincial natural resources ministers. The problem is we have a lot of talk but we do not have much action.

I am very supportive of the motion by the member for Timiskaming—French River who has brought this to our attention. I could go on and on about how tax administration should be different. We must move forward quickly to address the concerns of the mining sector.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

[English]

The order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

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

### INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on September 27, days after the standoffs concluded at Gustafsen Lake and Ipperwash, Ontario, I rose in the House to question the minister of Indian affairs about what should happen next. Obviously the issues raised in grievance by those occupying land and the concerns expressed by many who had not been occupying land had not been addressed and the frustration of aboriginal people concerning land was still outstanding.

I continue to believe that the federal government's approach to land claims and self-government, an approach that is slow, confusing and filled with uncertainties, is the first area of concern that needs to be dealt with if the frustrations and anxieties are ever to be reduced. Indian leaders throughout

Canada and through the Assembly of First Nations have said for many years that the anger among the people of their communities had to be addressed quickly or it would boil over.

During the second week of September when I called on the minister to get involved in the specifics of Ipperwash and Gustafsen Lake I said the only way to deal with the slow and uncertain nature of how land claim disputes are currently settled was with the understanding and intervention of the federal minister of Indian affairs. Only he has the authority to make the necessary changes. Only he has the jurisdiction to address the issues in a way that will adequately address the problems outlined by so many. Obviously those closest to the issue are the ones who should be consulted first, and those who work in the field must be consulted as well.

It comes as no surprise then to learn that the latest annual report of the Indian claims commission published this summer calls for the development and implementation of a new land claims policy and process. Here is the group caught in the middle between the bands and the government, receiving the applications, hearing and judging the evidence, and presenting the recommendations. Here is a group that does the work saying that it should be replaced, saying the workload is increasing dramatically and the ability of the existing commission to respond is limited, saying it is wrong for the government to have a process in place that allows the federal government to be a judge in claims against itself.

The commission stated: "Everything we have learned as a commission to date indicates that it is imperative to commence the process of reform immediately. It is imperative that an independent claims body be established to perform at least the initial assessment of the validity of First Nations land claims in Canada".

Upon reading the commission's report the editors of the *Montreal Gazette* had this to say: "It is important that aboriginal communities establish a solid land base. From it, economic development and self-government can follow. In its red book of campaign promises the Liberal Party said the current process is simply not working and promised to set up an independent claims commission. It should do so sooner rather than later".

That was my sentiment when I first asked the minister if it was his intention to establish a new process in policy.

That was my intention when I said I did not believe it would be in Canada's best interest to have First Nation's people from all across the country who may have legitimate land claims occupying land and leaving the resolution of those disputes to the local police. Land issues are not police matters. They are matters of critical concern to all Canadians and only the minister can deal with them. Therefore I was disappointed when the minister said he had to consult further. I hope he has now had the time to talk to the chiefs.