

sources. That is the way it works and that is the way it should work.

• (1820)

In conclusion, I want to return to the thrust of the motion which is to require the government to spend more resources and increase the aboriginal housing program. My response to that motion is that there will never be enough money. If these people are to rely on government programs, there will never be enough programs, there will never be enough general resources and there will never be general satisfaction among the recipients.

The solution is to find ways to encourage and give incentive to aboriginal people to become self-sufficient and part of the Canadian mainstream. I recognize that this is not either an easy thing to say or to accomplish but in the long run, it is the only real hope for aboriginal people living in our country today.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair should apologize to the Reform Party for not recognizing members of its party earlier in the debate.

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to address the motion put forward by the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake.

This is an important issue. The motion concerns on reserve housing. Having grown up in the central part of British Columbia, I have seen the evidence and I have heard the stories of the deplorable living conditions on some of the reserves.

These conditions can justifiably be called shameful in our society, certainly in the times we live in. Canada enjoys a very high standard of living, yet we have people, whether natives or not, living in abject poverty and deplorable housing situations. This is not something of which we can be proud.

The member suggests in his motion that the government should put more money into an improved housing program. The fact is that present fiscal realities simply do not permit the spending of more money to alleviate the problem.

In my opinion the money that the government is spending on native programs, particularly the housing programs and programs to help the social situation of the natives is already there. If only past governments and the present government spent a little more effectively and a little more efficiently, some of these problems could be looked after with the funds that are presently available.

Unfortunately the popular opinion by the Auditor General is that the Department of Indian Affairs is out of control in its spending. The Auditor General said that the government is throwing ever increasing amounts of money at the native people but the programs are ineffective and inefficient.

Private Members' Business

The report paints a picture of a disorganized Department of Indian Affairs lacking any direction, lacking any clear goals, lacking any monitoring of its existing spending, lacking any accountability of its existing spending. In fact the Auditor General gives the department a complete failing mark for the way it handles the funds that it has allocated to its department. It is totally out of control.

The funds are there within the department. The Department of Indian Affairs has a \$5.8 billion budget. The funds are there. They are just not being utilized effectively.

When members of the Reform Party start questioning some of the things that the government does or some of the things that past governments did, members opposite immediately say that the Reform Party does not care about the plight of the Indians. We do. We feel very strongly about the plight of the Indians.

What we care about as well is the taxpayers' money that the past and present governments have spent trying to solve the problems which the Indians have, trying to come up with solutions to improve their social standards, the plight of how they live, the houses that they live in and the deplorable conditions on the reserves.

• (1825)

We do care about that. That is the reason we questioned the way that the department of Indian affairs of this government spends its money. It is out of control and it is not going to improve until this government gets a handle on how the bureaucracy is spending its money, until it starts making demands for accountability, monitoring, evaluation, and results.

One of the popular opinions in this country concerning the department of Indian affairs is that there is no bureaucrat in that department who ever wants to get the problem solved because if they ever solve a problem they will work themselves out of a job. We have a huge department that is overstaffed, overfunded and underproductive.

There is a considerable amount of problems among the governments with respect to the delivery of the housing services. One of the problems is that the federal, provincial and territory governments are all involved in providing housing. A recent committee report by the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs found there was a lack of focus because of these three levels of government that were involved. It was resulting in a patchwork of housing initiatives that really were not solving problems for anyone.

The committee said that there was little or no co-ordination between the three levels of government. The lack of co-ordination is not constrained to governments. It has also been found to be rampant within various departmental programs. For instance, DIAND is not directly involved in housing in the territories. Both Yukon and Northwest Territories have a cost-sharing agreement with CMHC. However, it must be noticed that 50 per