

Government Orders

that is totally foreign to them, and in the process infecting them with smallpox, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases?

How can they be so dense that they cannot understand that the Government of Canada and the people of Canada are now trying to correct a situation, an injustice that has been around for a few hundred years?

I will repeat my remarks from earlier. The Reform Party members talk as if the aboriginal people are invading their land. It is as if we are taking land away from them. They can record their history in hundreds of years. We can record ours in thousands and tens of thousands of years. The sheer audacity of this group—I am at a loss for words.

How would they feel if they woke up one morning and suddenly found themselves subject to a totally different kind of life than they had been used to for years and years?

Some of them make statements that they are all for aboriginal self-government, self-determination. Strip away that veneer and I think all we see is paternalistic statements from the Reform Party. It is like saying some of my best friends are Indians. It is good to say it but it does not really mean much, because the respect and the support have to be there from within rather than just saying it on the surface.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his comments. I do not think that anyone would deny that there have been injustices done. I detailed some examples of that, how that has taken place down through the history of our country.

I think also that what I was trying to get at in my presentation is that when rights are granted to individuals or to groups there are corresponding responsibilities that go with those rights. I do not see in this agreement where that is taking place within the confines of the agreement. I see all sorts of things being granted to this group of Canadians, and I think we have to distinguish here that we are all Canadians and we have all benefited from this great land of ours in different ways. Even the native people, the aboriginal people, have clearly benefited from Canada. My comment is that they also have to take responsibility. If they are going to go down the road toward self-government—there clearly does not seem to be any definition of that forthcoming from the opposite side of the House—then obviously there should be this devolution of power, to the Sahtu people in this particular case, to the aboriginal people in Canada, but also they should be seeking to give up any further rights to aboriginal programs.

• (1630)

My hope always was that once we came to a reasonable and fair settlement and self-government for the aboriginal people that at some point we would all be treated equally. There would not be any programs specifically based on race any more.

I see that this agreement does not accomplish that, even though the monetary compensation is paid, even though the land use is guaranteed, even though the fee simple land is given over, even though subsurface mineral rights are given to these people from the Government of Canada. The bottom line still appears to be that they do not give up any future access to aboriginal programs, either existing ones or ones in the future. That was the thrust of my speech. That is my concern.

Mr. Julian Reed (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member and I have a hard time coming to grips with the root of his reasoning.

He suggests somehow that Canada is giving them something. In his speech he even goes on to suggest that other agreements would have given them less. I cannot really comprehend it. Then the hon. member goes on to say we are going to give them these things but what are their obligations. In other words he wants to pay homage or lip service to self-government but then turns around and says we should be making the rules for them and tell them what their obligations are. That is what I hear in the speech.

We are not giving the natives anything. It is already theirs. We are simply arriving at a suitable accommodation so that the country can forge ahead.

I saw a cartoon once where two Indians are standing on Mount Royal watching Jacques Cartier land. The soldiers are about to get off the boat and come ashore and one Indian is saying to the other: "Let them land. What harm can they do?"

Does the hon. member really believe that we are giving them something by these agreements? I have really failed to understand what direction he is coming from. We have already taken. It is already theirs.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question and comments regarding my presentation.

What I was referring to was that the ancestors of the Sahtu Dene did sign treaty No. 11. As signatories to that treaty certain things were decided on, one of which was that there should be 128 acres granted per person under the treaty. What we see under this new agreement goes far beyond that.

I believe that as a people and a country we are giving up something. If we are not then I would ask the member in return where is the \$75 million coming from? It is coming from