

Routine Proceedings

Why is it that the federal government's plan is to bring water and sewage into those communities; not to pay for the hook-ups into the houses, not to pay for toilets, not to pay for sinks but to insist that bands which just do not have the money use their very limited capital funds?

Does the minister not realize that with that approach native people will not have water and sewer systems in their homes?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I certainly know that there are a small number of aboriginal communities remaining in Canada with water and sewer systems that are not yet up to the national standard.

That is why the government approved new funding of \$250 million. It was announced a year ago. Upgrades in those affected communities, which are a small number of all native communities in Canada, are under way.

The question of the hook-ups has to do with distinguishing between the band support financing and their capital planning for which most bands receive budgets well in excess of \$1 million, up to \$5 million or more per year in many cases, on the basis of a long-range formula financing arrangement and the bringing of the main infrastructure services into those communities.

If the hon. member has a specific aspect of this problem he would like me to look into further, I would be most pleased to do so.

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[*Translation*]

TRADE

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, we are in the fourth year of the free trade agreement and yet there is no definition of a subsidy.

Given that the government and the minister are fully aware of the impact of this definition on the Canadian economy, is he willing today to commit his government to withdraw from the North American free trade talks and not to sign the agreement before this definition is agreed to?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is aware that in the Uruguay round negotiations there has been a good definition of subsidy. It is more extensive than I think had been considered by my hon. friend and his colleagues prior to the announcement of the December 20 Dunkel paper. It affects subsidies by other countries that affect our markets in third countries. I think that is a substantial step forward.

It also affects subsidies that are provided by state governments in the United States that again adversely affect our markets in the United States. There is a major step forward here if we are able to get a successful Uruguay round negotiation.

I can assure my hon. friend that if we get that we will be carrying it through as much as we can into the NAFTA negotiations.

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PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

Mr. Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Ahmed Hassan Diria, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation for Tanzania.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I would like to designate tomorrow, Tuesday, March 31, 1992, as an allotted day.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 81 petitions.