

Government Orders

We in the Reform Party are so often classified or stereotyped as not being beneficial to other people. Personally I would rather donate half of my resources to the next generation than to find out in later years that my children or their children are fighting and forcing a settlement on each other.

We see that happening today in the former Yugoslavia. All of a sudden they have decided they can live better as separate little nations. It takes foreign countries to come in and try to solve the disputes.

• (1710)

I would never be able to rest in my grave if I were party to some agreements that in the future should have to be resolved by military force or by some other type of unlawful activity as I would call it.

I think back to the 1940s. I can remember the situation right after the 1930s and how the white people in our community and the native people shared their assets and their food because everybody was in a tough situation. If we could get back that type of concern I do not think we would be talking about these huge land settlement deals.

It worries me when I see \$8 billion to \$10 billion being paid to our native brothers every year and we are not being given one little bit of recognition for that.

Ms. McLaughlin: We have sisters.

Mr. Hoepfner: Well sisters, brothers, whoever it is. I would think that the government has never been able to print money. The government's money comes from the taxpayers and it only comes from taxpayers who are working and sharing it with other people. If that \$8 billion to \$10 billion is not sharing I would like to know how much it would take before it was called sharing.

Right now with the attitude of the sharing that our government has had, we are in debt to the tune of \$550 billion which some day either the native children or my children will have to repay. How this is going to be accomplished I do not know, but I wish the hon. member for Yukon could give me some suggestions. I would surely support her in any way that we could resolve that issue so that it could be settled in some better way.

Eventually when financial disaster does come upon a nation it creates a lot of other problems. That is one thing we have to realize with all these settlements. If we are going to be fair to future generations we had better be fair to the generations here today. We will be forcing them to pay something we were not willing to pay.

With that I will close my remarks. I wish this House would make some decision that would not just benefit us today but that would also benefit future generations.

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about "laws that worked so well over the years". I wonder if the member was talking about the laws that established residential schools, or the laws that resulted in aboriginal children being taken away from their parents. Would it be the laws that prevented aboriginal people from voting? Would it be those laws that took away the right of aboriginal people who fought for their country or became a doctor or a lawyer to be identified as a status Indian?

The member is so much against this bill and its dispute settlement capabilities. As a member of the Reform Party that supported, ill advised I would suggest, the U.S.-Canada trade deal and NAFTA, does he think we should do away with the dispute settlement mechanism in that trade deal?

Mr. Hoepfner: Mr. Speaker, I am quite convinced there were laws and institutions that abused our native brothers and sisters. It makes me very sad that I lived to pay testimony to that.

• (1715)

I think through some of the law reform that we have had we are at a stage now where that should not happen, not nearly as easily.

I would also like to remind the hon. member for Yukon that the white people were not always here. I read in history where there was self-government by these native people. They did also have problems. They had a right at that time to live very peacefully. They had a right to live without starvation. When we read the history books it did happen.

I am not blaming them for that but we have to realize that through history there have been problems. As we have learned from these problems I think we have become wiser. That is what we have experienced through the thirties and the forties probably where a lot of abuse was happening to these First Nations and it makes me very sad that it did.

I also note that if we are going to pass laws and make commitments which we have to honour with future generations' wealth we are asking for severe problems and a lot worse conditions in this country than we have today.

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, the member is against this bill which has a dispute settlement mechanism. Would he also say that because the trade deal between Canada and the U.S. has a dispute settlement mechanism it should be done away with as well?

Mr. Hoepfner: Mr. Speaker, I would say if we had one government and the same laws we would not need that trade dispute settlement mechanism. Here we are creating more governments, more laws and we are forcing more dispute settling mechanisms on our society.