

James Bay Agreement

same basis as to other Indians of Canada in the case of federal programs, and to other Indians in Québec in the case of provincial programs, subject to the criteria established from time to time for the application of such programs, and to general parliamentary approval of such programs and funding.

• (1500)

The allegation was that we were not doing that with them, we were not spending the same degree of program moneys for the Cree as we were for other Indians, because we charged against that anything they had won under the Agreement. Of course, we had to agree with them that that was fair.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Chairman, my question is of that general nature. If I understood the Minister correctly, we are granting—and I hate to use the word “granting” because I believe that they should have self-government—but, because of the stipulations of the Indian Act, we are passing another Bill which will grant them self-government. But we are not really sure if they will have adequate funding for health care, education, water and sewage and housing, which will enable them to provide an adequate government for their people. Are we not, in that case, building in failure by not providing adequate funding at the same time?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether the Hon. Member knows the Cree leadership as I do, but I do not think they would have been urging us and pressuring all of us to pass this Cree-Naskapi Act if they had not thought that they had reached a pretty successful set of negotiations with the federal Government as far as funding is concerned. That might be unduly depreciating to their bargaining abilities. That is a dangerous type of depreciation, believe me.

The funding has been negotiated. I referred to the \$11 million, which is a base. Price increases, inflation and so on will come to bear in succeeding years. It is subject to renegotiation. It cannot go below that level. The elements of the funding position have been agreed upon between the parties.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Chairman, does the Minister believe that the level of funding is adequate to provide the people of that area with adequate education, water and sewage, services and housing? Does he really believe that that money—considering how far behind they are in terms of health care, education, etc.—is adequate?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, if you look at the Tait report and the \$61 million which has been negotiated and then you look at this fund, then I say, yes. The answer is yes, I do. In terms of comparability and taking into account the area and so on, yes, it is adequate. My hope would be that we could do the same—quite frankly, we do not have the money; it would undoubtedly be hundreds of millions of dollars—elsewhere in the particularly stark and depressing areas of the country. Billy Diamond and the Cree leadership are fully aware of that. It depends on what one compares it to. If we compare it to the funding in other areas in which Indian people live, it is far more adequate than some are receiving, I am sorry to say.

Mr. Nickerson: Mr. Chairman, I have a very brief question. The taxing authority which is to be granted to bands under Clause 45(1)(h) will not be effective until such time as the Governor in Council has issued regulations. The Minister is undoubtedly aware of this. Could he tell us what progress has been made with respect to these regulations?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I would like to say through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Hon. Member for Western Arctic, that we must sit down and have further discussions with the Cree as to what those regulations should be. We have not had very much time. We have been under a lot of pressure lately, not only with this legislation but with Indian self-government. We will not pass the regulation until we have had thorough consultations with the concerned parties. Obviously those regulations are designed to ensure uniformity and fairness. Those are the two principal criteria which we try to ensure in any type of taxing law.

Mr. Nickerson: Mr. Chairman, I take it then that no work as yet has been done on the regulations as required under Clause 45(4). Clause 45(6), contemplates the collection of taxes in a form other than money. Could the Minister please tell us what he means by a form other than money?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, this is a feature that the Crees themselves wanted to include in the Bill. It would give the band administration the flexibility to levy taxes against one of their members. If that member had some substance or article other than money, and it was acceptable to the band in payment of taxes, they would have the flexibility to accept it as payment.

Mr. Nickerson: Does that clause contemplate the payment of taxes in labour? Are we going back to the old seigniorial system?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, after listening to statements made by the Hon. Member in the House, I dare say that I think the Cree are probably as progressive as he is, and perhaps more so. I do not know whether the Hon. Member is accusing them of running a feudal state, but I suppose it is possible. The person is not required to render a community service or labour. If he offers it in lieu of payment and the band wants to accept it, I guess they have the right to accept it.

Mr. Nickerson: Mr. Chairman, I have a further question which deals with expropriation of the so-called lands IA and IA-N. The Province of Quebec as well as several other public bodies are to have expropriating authority. Could the Minister tell us what public bodies other than the Province of Quebec will have powers of expropriation over these lands?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Chairman, if the Hon. Member would look at page 56 of the Bill, Part VII sets out the parameters for this type of expropriation. It flows directly from the agreement entered into between the Government of Quebec, the Cree and the Government of Canada. Those powers of expropriation are stipulated in that part. “Other public bodies” obviously refers to entities and institutions such