

wages that people need to feed their children. These are the wages that people need to pay their mortgage.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Edmonton Northwest on a point of order.

Mr. Dorin: Mr. Speaker, I was just wondering whether this was a throne speech debate or a debate on Bill C-51, because we are covering a pretty wide range of subjects here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I think the hon. member is really coming to the bill.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS — MOTIONS

[English]

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

NEEDS OF YOUTH

The House resumed from Tuesday, March 20, consideration of the motion of Mr. Anawak:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider developing special initiatives, in consultation with aboriginal peoples, to respond to the serious employment, education and health needs of aboriginal youth.

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to be able to join in such an important debate. I thank my colleagues on this side of the House for presenting this motion for our general consideration. I can think of no issue which haunts all Canadians more than the need to deal with the issues facing aboriginal youth across this country.

Since this debate began several weeks ago, I have noticed that the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Max Yalden, has added his voice to the debate. His argument is that the treatment of native peoples in Canada is one of our greatest and most pressing problems. He, in fact, would like to see a royal commission set up to address this issue.

Whether or not a royal commission would add to the momentum remains to be seen, but certainly it is one more indication of the anxiousness among those people

Private Members' Business

who wish to see this issue addressed. Mr. Yalden's approach should be taken seriously by the government and by all of us sitting in this House.

We are asked in this motion to consider ways in which the Canadian government can begin to address specific questions facing aboriginal youth. Perhaps we should reflect for a moment on why there are so many problems among youth in terms of education, health and employment. I think we can begin by realizing that for every positive influence given to non-native, non-aboriginal children, those influences are probably lacking with respect to aboriginal children.

One fact not appreciated by many parliamentarians is that while people my age, the baby boom, have benefitted from in Canadian society, it is different in the native community. In fact their baby boom is going on as we speak. While their greatest growth in population is with the youth between 15 and 25, this is the group that is totally lacking in education, employment, proper health care, and housing. At that very moment when they need us we are not doing anything for them.

How can we begin to address the problems? Over the last decade in the province of Manitoba there have been groups which have reached out. Perhaps we should accentuate the positive in this debate and talk about what people are trying to do.

I can think of my own involvement over the last decade, for example, in the community of Shamattawa in northern Manitoba, a very remote community of a few hundred people. In that community we had tremendous difficulty with gasoline sniffing. Through an intervention project and the setting up of a community centre, the children of that community realized there was some place to go and something to do other than going off to the bush to sniff gasoline. That led to further employment projects and the community is very proud of the fact that today they have built their own school. That is not a project run by southerners, but a project run by people from the community.

A little farther south is Norway House, another remote community. In Norway House the situation among the 3,000 people living there was so bad that the youth took it upon themselves to form the Norway House Youth Council with its own young chief. This youth council has an employment committee, an education committee, and a health committee. It set up a youth conference and invited people from outside the