

Again government spending on educational programs, particularly the one in Bella Bella at this time, is imperative if the next generation is to improve in these communities. It is vital that this occur.

I do not want to elaborate on the condition of housing. We have noted for a number of weeks the Prime Minister making very worth-while tours examining the problems of disparity throughout the world in terms of the North-South dialogue they are attempting to develop. But I would suggest one of the most eloquent visual things that could happen would be for the Prime Minister to take a trip to a number of Indian communities. The thing that jumps right out at you is the degree of housing. There has to be a massive infusion of money in order to bring Indian community housing up to an acceptable level. We have heard horror stories in this House about the lack of running water, homes that need rehabilitation, and on and on. Spending on housing is vitally important. Housing is at a level that would not be acceptable in other communities in Canada or to other groups. There would be people lined up for miles outside this door screaming if other people had to live in the kind of housing that Indian communities are asked to accept.

Let me refer to postal service. This community of 1,200 people operates a school district, seven businesses, including a store, a shipbuilding enterprise, and a bulk fuel plant, but has mail service only three days a week, and sometimes less because of weather conditions. The Post Office will never tell the air carrier when and how much mail is to be flown in, and quite often the mail is bumped. This band handles millions of dollars in administration. The school district handles large amounts of money and records, as do the other businesses, and the situation is absolutely chaotic. There is no bank in that community, consequently every transaction has to be moved back and forward. We have to ensure that the money we are spending on government service is spent in such a way that they obtain equitable services, especially in the area of postal service.

I was disappointed to hear the Postmaster General say that for 17 cents he was doing a great job delivering mail to such a remote community. By air service it is not that far away. I hope at a future meeting with officials of his department we can resolve this situation.

The most important area where government spending is vital, if it is going to build an income base or a good economy in the community and provide the people who live there with a decent standard of living, is transportation. No economy can be developed without reasonable transportation. There are two methods of transportation to that community, one is by water and the other is by air, and both are in a chaotic state right now.

At the present time the British Columbia Ferry System operate a ferry to and from Bella Bella on its way to Prince Rupert. In the summer, they curtail their activities because it is more important to carry tourists. The rest of the year, if there are less than 20 passengers, they will not stop and they will not allow freight to be carried to and from that community because it would compete with other forms of transporta-

tion. By and large, the government clearly discriminates against this community because other communities are entitled to carry freight on trailers.

• (1620)

I believe that a roll-on roll-off ferry should be built there so that those people can reduce the cost of freight, the cost of living and the cost of doing business in that community so as to create more viable businesses and to create business opportunities. For a number of years the provincial government of British Columbia has led these people to believe the ferry will be built, but it has never kept its promise. The federal government provides a subsidy to that province for an adequate ferry service, and yet we never see it delivered. I understand the Minister of Transport has currently under way a study evaluating transportation on the west coast, and this input is vital.

No money should be paid on that coast unless it is for specific guaranteed programs under which communities, such as Bella Bella, will have the same access as other communities of a similar size, such as Ocean Falls, to a roll-on roll-off ramp, the ability to carry freight, and regular stops. That is imperative. It is clear discrimination against an Indian community, and this government is a party to it. The federal government must supply funds and must ensure that adequate service is available to these people. It is the only logical way of guaranteeing the federal investment which is already being put in there. Without a transportation base, that investment is lost.

Government red tape, bureaucracy and regulations are best epitomized in the air transportation service to that community. There are two small islands there. One is Campbell Island, with a population of 1,200 Indian people, and the other, half a mile away, is Denny Island, with 50 people who essentially live off the Indian community. The Department of Transport was asked to do a site evaluation for an airport in the central coast region. The two sites were, of course, Denny Island with 50 people, and Campbell Island with 1,200 Indian people. What happened was that the government said that both sites are technically acceptable, but it will not make the decision; the responsibility is that of the province of British Columbia. The province of British Columbia said it was the federal government's responsibility—

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. I have been listening carefully to the hon. member for Comox-Powell River and I find that he has yet to mention the Income Tax Act. He has spoken about the Post Office, about the ferry boat service, about bureaucracy in general—all points on which I agree with him—he has spoken about the herring fishery, but he has yet to talk about the Income Tax Act. If we are ever to get through this bill, we cannot continue to go on with member after member talking about everything under the sun but the income tax.

The Chairman: The hon. member's point is very well taken. The Chair has attempted to enforce the rule of relevance with, I might add, a singular lack of success on both sides of the