

prairies to the port. It was a very simple condition. It can almost be called a condition of Confederation for western Canada.

Many farmers are very upset the government came along and out of the blue announced the deal was no longer in effect. The farmers have to pay once again for a service that was paid for long ago, and the railways once again get off scot free. In principle that is grossly unfair.

The \$1.6 billion is an arbitrary figure that means virtually nothing. "Where did the government get this figure from", farmers ask. The prairie pools have made their calculations. They said if the Crow benefit were to be eliminated and replaced with a fair payout to farmers the bill should be providing authority to pay \$7 billion rather than the inadequate \$1.6 billion which will do very little to compensate the landowner or the shipper, no matter how we look at it.

Another problem with this section of the legislation is the fact that it proposes to pay the \$1.6 billion to landowners rather than to producers. It seems the Liberals think that compensating for the loss of land value, which they acknowledge will result from the loss of the Crow benefit, is more important than compensating farmers for the additional costs associated with increased freight rates. Paying money to landowners means that about 40 per cent of the payout destined for Saskatchewan will go to the banks and other financial institutions such as the Farm Credit Corporation.

Although the Liberals say that these institutions should pass along the payout to those who lease land from them, there is no guarantee, no certainty that anything will get passed on. At the same time the legislation makes the payout to landowners including the banks tax free; but money that finds its way to farmers who lease their land, if the money gets to them, becomes taxable. Obviously this means that the Liberals seem to have much more sympathy for the poor banks than they do for the poor farmers.

Third and last in this section, the legislation before us leaves virtually all the details about how this is going to be handled to the regulations. All the questions about who qualifies, what kind of land will be paid for, when the cheques will be written and mailed and so on will be decided in the minister's office. The specifics will be settled in the regulations. The decisions are left to the bureaucracy and there is virtually no public input through this Chamber and members of Parliament.

In conclusion, there is much wrong with this idea. This legislation should not be supported by the members of this House.

I once again appeal to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. I ask that all this stuff relating to the elimination of

Private Members' Business

the Crow benefit be put off until such time as a complete evaluation of the consequences has been written and reviewed. We cannot afford to abandon the farm economy and the communities that depend on that economy.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 1.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

HATE PROPAGANDA

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North, Lib.) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should move with speed to adopt legislative measures aimed at stopping the spread of hate propaganda via the electronic information highway while simultaneously preserving legitimate use of the freedom of speech and expression.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the motion before us appeals to our core Canadian values: respect for dignity, respect for self-worth, and respect for the equality of all individuals. These values are pillars of Canadian society. They are the glue that holds the Canadian mosaic together. They are tools of harmony. We are therefore fiercely proud of these values. They are the foundation of this private member's motion.

The motion raises two fundamental questions: What is the interrelationship between the information highway and the freedom of speech and expression? How can we as a people protect our core societal values without impinging on the core area of the freedom of expression? Before I address these questions Mr. Speaker, permit me to give an overview of the information technology revolution and what it means for Canadians and Canada in the world.

Indeed, we as peoples of the earth have entered the information age. Information technology has reached a level of progress which now gives people the ability to communicate with others around the world via a network of computer systems popularly known as the information highway or superhighway. Although the phrase comprises many aspects, the computer network most nearly synonymous with it is the Internet.

The Internet revolution started in the 1960s when the U.S. defence department linked its various sites. By the late 1970s this had expanded to universities around the globe. The real turning point came within the last couple of years with the introduction of the World Wide Web. Now the Internet encompasses more than 30,000 networks and 2.5 million computers. There are as many as 35 million users in more than 100 countries. Today one needs only a personal computer, a modem