

Indian Self-Government

Without the controlling mechanism which could have been used in FIRA, and which is definitely not in Investment Canada, any foreign money invested here will go to the Golden Horseshoe area of Ontario to boost the manufacturing sector. But we in northwestern Ontario, and I suggest every other part of this country, will not get the investment we need in order to produce new wealth. It will not focus investment in a community like Atikokan, in Ear Falls, which is currently undergoing a severe employment crisis. It will not help the community of Thunder Bay which has in excess of 14,000 men and women currently seeking full-time employment. I suspect that before this winter is out that number will rise to over 15,000. Investment Canada is not going to steer money to northwestern Ontario and those communities.

I think that if we gave this government six months to do the kind of research that my colleague referred to, to rethink the Bill, perhaps instead of a weakening of our control over our own destiny, we will have a mechanism which will ensure that the money, whether it be Canadian or otherwise, will be used to benefit the Canadian public.

I will take my chair for the moment, Mr. Speaker, and resume tomorrow.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

● (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS— MOTIONS

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Shall all orders and items preceding No. 27 stand by unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

ADVISABILITY OF PROMOTING INDIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

The House resumed, from December 4, 1984, consideration of the motion of Mr. Penner:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of promoting Indian self-government by:

1. Announcing support for an affirmative policy of constitutional recognition of aboriginal self-government;
2. Pursuing actively, a bilateral process of discussion with representatives of first nations on such issues as self-government, natives claims and the elimination of the extinguishment policy; and
3. Introducing legislation to recognize first nations self-government which should be developed by means of a joint process and utilization of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to speak on a motion which was introduced a few weeks ago with regard to Indian self-government. When I left off my remarks a few weeks ago I had not had the opportunity to go into detail in some of the areas I feel we should be considering. Over the last number of weeks and months I have sat on the Standing Committee for Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I have been able to study in more detail what Indian Affairs is all about and what the problems of native people are. I would like to relate my remarks strictly to the riding of Timiskaming in northern Ontario. There we have bands in the Moose Factory area, the Temagami area and in the North Bay and Sturgeon Falls areas.

We as elected officials have to study the problems facing the native people of Canada. One and a half years ago the committee of this House toured Canada to deal with some of the problems affecting native people. Native housing in the area of James Bay, for example, is an area that we will be addressing. The previous Government failed over the last 16 years to deal with the tragedy which has affected the native people's livelihoods over a long period of time. The previous Government did not deal with the medical problems in the James Bay area. I am very pleased to say that this Government and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie) will certainly be dealing with that. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will be in Thunder Bay tomorrow to meet with the chiefs of Treaty 9 which comprises the James Bay, lower mainland area.

This Government is trying to co-operate and work with the native people to solve the problems which have affected them over the last number of years. That is why I have a problem with dealing so quickly with this motion on Indian self-government. This Government wants to work with the native people and the provinces to resolve the problems which have been caused over the years. We will be dealing with housing problems and the health care system which have been neglected over the years.

One area that we must address very quickly is the unemployment problem of native people, whether on reserve or off reserve. Native people across the country have not been given the opportunity to have the steady employment which other Canadians across the country enjoy. It is no wonder that native band councils across the country want to resolve this problem with Indian self-government. All Canadians must be very sincere, concerned and aware of this.

The Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development has addressed many issues affecting native people in the last number of weeks and will continue to do so. Sitting down as we do with the officials from the Government and the officials from the band councils across Canada is the proper procedure to resolve the problems. I am looking forward to being able to say, at the end of our four-year term, that we have worked closely and freely and resolved problems which native people have had for years. The prior Government