

*Routine Proceedings*

moved back to their homes within a space of two or three years. Most actually were not moved back to their community in northern Quebec until the 1980s, some 30 years after they were moved up to the high Arctic in the first place.

While the government would lead us to believe that the relocation of these Inuit families was voluntary, in fact witnesses told the committee that the move was led by the RCMP. They said that in those days when the RCMP came to your door and made a suggestion to you, because of the intimidation of the RCMP and because of the tendency of the people to believe and to follow orders from the RCMP, you did what you were told, Mr. Speaker.

Even though it is suggested by the government that this move was a voluntary move, in fact the Inuit families who were ultimately moved from northern Quebec up into the high Arctic at Resolute and Grise Fiord felt that they had no other option, that they were being ordered to move. Therefore they did move.

They also felt that they had been misled because the federal government bureaucrats had told them that there was more wildlife and other materials up there that would make their life better and make them less dependent on welfare. In fact, this was not the case.

Witnesses also told the committee that their treatment by Canadian authorities and by the RCMP included sexual assault, exchanging the right of work or food for sexual favours and the outright use of slave labour by Canadian authorities in the northern communities of Grise Fiord and Resolute. At this point we are told that there is an internal RCMP investigation, though not a public inquiry, into the criminal aspects of the charges laid against Canadian authorities at Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay, but that according to the documents submitted yesterday that came from the bureaucracy, but were submitted by the minister in this House, the RCMP are having difficulty arranging interviews with the key complainants.

I am sure that since the key complainants are making accusations of sexual assault against RCMP members, it is going to be difficult to reach the complainants.

As the House will know, the committee after hearing Inuit witnesses and in the absence of any credible evidence to the contrary made the following recommendations.

It recommended that the government acknowledge the role played by the Inuit relocated to the high Arctic in protection of Canadian sovereignty in the north. It asked the government to apologize for the wrongdoing which the government inflicted on the people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay at that time, a result of these concerns about northern sovereignty. The committee also asked that an apology be carried out with due solemnity and it asked that the apology be accompanied with some form of recognition of the contribution to Canadian sovereignty made by the Inuit people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay. The government was asked to consider compensation for the people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay for their service to Canada and for the wrongdoings inflicted upon them.

Those were the recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and unanimously agreed to by all parties in that committee, the Conservative members, the Liberal members and the New Democratic members. It was unanimously recommended to the House of Commons, based on the direct evidence from the people who were involved in the incident and who had suffered from the incident and who have direct knowledge of the incident.

In addition the committee called on the government within the customary time period of 150 days to respond to the committee's report. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the government's response was tabled yesterday by the minister, and it denied all of the evidence submitted by the Inuit witnesses who appeared before the committee or who were involved in the Grise Fiord-Resolute Bay relocations.

It denied that the motives for the relocation was to defend the sovereignty of the Canadian north. It refused an apology and the government based its report on what it called an independent outside consultant, mutually acceptable to the Makivik Corporation and to the department.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the so-called independent report done by the government in consultation with the Makivik Corporation is completely false in its conclusions. It is selective in its use of the evidence, and its intent was to whitewash the bureaucrats living