

production of essential grains, as the world moved toward a food crisis. Had there been even interim planning, perhaps Canada would now be prepared to make a significant contribution in terms of supplying leadership toward establishing a world food-security system which is so urgently needed. The government has failed both to plan ahead and to face its international responsibilities.

● (1640)

We have heard and read a great deal about the magnitude of the world food crisis. The statistics are appalling, frightening. Face to face confrontation with the ravages of famine is even more devastating. We know that at least 460 million people are unable to lead normal lives because they are permanently hungry. We know that 100,000 people died of starvation last year in Ethiopia. And we know that, for the first time in history, the world has only 28 days of food supplies in reserve.

World-wide inflationary pressures, drought, and a rapidly increasing world population daily aggravate the global disparity between supply and demand for food. No one country can hope to ameliorate significantly, let alone resolve, the threat to the survival of hundreds of millions of human beings in the decade ahead. But the "have" countries such as Canada have an overwhelming moral obligation to combat world famine by efforts, indeed by sacrifices, far surpassing anything we have previously contributed.

Long term planning in food production for domestic and international consumption must become a top priority. But this will not be accomplished by ad hoc measures, by temporary subsidies, or by an alternating disincentive and crash incentive approach to production. It will require strong governmental leadership which, to date, has been sadly lacking.

No better example of this lack can be found than in the "Western Producer" of August 22, 1974 which reported:

Agriculture Minister Whelan was not very optimistic about Canada's willingness to contribute to feeding an underfed world. He reviewed what Canadians have already done and then said: "Canada does have tremendous resources to increase food production. But Canada does not have unlimited wealth to pay farmers the price required to push production to the limits of our ability and technology. Canada does not have unlimited wealth to set aside surplus production in storage or to give food away to less fortunate peoples in the world. But most important, I do not see the will on behalf of Canadians to make sacrifices that would be necessary".

If that is the view of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), and it obviously is, does he not accept a responsibility to challenge Canadians to develop our tremendous resources to increase food production? There is no leadership there in this mounting world crisis, just an abdication of leadership. Fortunately, that is not the view of Charles Munro, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and of the 45-country International Federation of Agriculture Producers, who said:

Canada would have much more food for export to under-developed countries if the government could end the "boom and bust" cycle in the farm economy.

He went on to say that:

As farmers we say we have the potential and the technology to feed twice as many people as we do now, but there has to be the political will to do it.

#### *The Address—Miss F. MacDonald*

The key phrase is "the political will to do it". I am sure that if the Minister of Agriculture were to ask the farmers, he would find that there is the will on the part of the farmers and, if the Prime Minister were to ask the Canadian people, he would find that there is the will on the part of the Canadian people. But there is a real question as to the political will on the part of the government. The political will is lacking because the Prime Minister is so obsessed with institutional restructuring.

I see this lack of political will reflected in another area with which I would like to deal, namely, the plight of our native people. Completely overlooked in the throne speech, inserted as an afterthought in the Prime Minister's remarks, the native people and their grievances have been the subject of much discussion, analysis and indeed criticism in recent days.

At times it appeared that the welter of writing and reporting, the interpretations and misinterpretations, the obsession with who did what and to whom during the demonstration on Parliament Hill, would distract attention from the legitimate frustrations and aims of our native people. That demonstration riveted the nation's attention on Indian grievances—grievances which have been documented on many occasions by the native brotherhoods, grievances which have had numerous airings but few answers.

Briefs on housing, economic development and land claims have gone without ministerial acknowledgement for months; perhaps because they were suspected of presenting a biased point of view. But a recent government publication demonstrates succinctly and graphically, and surely entirely without bias, the bitter facts which underlie native frustration.

Far more alarming than the native demonstration on Parliament Hill are the facts contained in "Perspective Canada", a compendium of social statistics produced by Statistics Canada in July of 1974 which provides irrefutable data to show that the social conditions of our native population are deteriorating, not improving.

In 1971, 25.4 per cent of families on reserves needed new housing, as compared with 19.7 per cent in 1965. In addition, twice as many houses were classified as needing major repairs in 1971 as in 1958. The minister in charge of housing will take note, I hope, that native housing is deteriorating both qualitatively and quantitatively.

This morning in committee we learned that there is a need for 20,000 new homes on Indian reserves, but this year only 2,000 were constructed, or one tenth of the actual need. This is less than one home per reservation. Is it any wonder that we see demonstrations and increasing militancy from our native peoples? To hear a cabinet minister admonish Canadians, as the minister who is responsible for housing did last week, saying that they should be grateful for their high standard of housing, must heap coals on the fires of Indian frustration.

The desperate housing situation is basic to the other severe problems the native peoples face, namely, health, education, and economic opportunity. What chance does a child have to get proper rest, to study, to learn a trade in a two roomed shack which is in need of major repairs? For far too long government has concentrated on unrelated