

Supply

Those rights existed and they continue to exist. They cannot be granted by a Parliament. They can be recognized. It is incumbent upon us as a Parliament to respect and recognize those rights. As long as we deny them, we are involved in an injustice or dishonesty. It is incumbent upon us as a Parliament to recognize that those rights have always existed and exist now. We must deal with them in a realistic manner which befits the 1980s.

● (1730)

Mr. MacDougall: Mr. Speaker, all three Parties are doing their utmost to come up with a consensus in this debate. On one hand, with the ongoing negotiations on a trade agreement between Canada and the U.S., members of the New Democratic Party feel that the provinces should have a veto power. On the other hand, the Hon. Member feels that as a federal Government we should be able to override the provinces on this issue. Could he explain to the House why there are two different standards on these issues?

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, we are talking about two completely different things. We are talking about the entrenchment of the right to self-government in the Constitution. The Hon. Member should know that there cannot be any entrenchment without the consent of seven provinces with 50 per cent of the population. Certainly the provinces have a great deal of control.

What I am calling for, and what we have not seen from the Government, is leadership. That leadership should have been exercised down the line, from the moment when the Prime Minister was elected, in attempting to mould public opinion and to obtain the support of the Premiers for a strong recognition of the inherent right of aboriginal peoples to self-government. The federal Government cannot ride roughshod over them, because it must deal within the Constitution. We are calling for moral and political leadership on the part of the Prime Minister. We have not seen it. We would dearly like to see it. There are two weeks remaining before the constitutional conference. I should like to see the Prime Minister do his damndest to get something to happen.

Mr. Redway: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Hon. Member's comments in respect of aboriginal rights. I note that in the national convention of the New Democratic Party, the thirteenth federal NDP convention held in Ottawa in June and July, 1985, his Party passed the following resolution in respect of aboriginal rights:

WHEREAS the Liberals and the Conservatives have stated that aboriginal rights must be extinguished in Land Claims settlements, in spite of consistent resistance from native peoples; . . .

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New Democratic Party supports the position that aboriginal rights are non-extinguishable in Canada—

The Hon. Member is aware that the Minister for Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. McKnight) and the Government have now adopted the provisions of the Coolican report which called for a comprehensive land claims policy and provided that there was to be no extinguishment of rights

within that process. In fact, part of that process was to include negotiation for self-government.

Would the Hon. Member advise the House if, at the forthcoming national convention of his Party this Friday, he will be moving a motion to congratulate the Government on its aboriginal rights policy?

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I will be able to do that. I would dearly like to move a motion at our federal convention congratulating the Government for its aboriginal rights policy, if it had a policy in which it recognized the inherent right of aboriginal peoples to self-government.

If the Government comes out with that statement tomorrow, I will do my darndest to move an emergency resolution of congratulations to the Government.

When the Government indicated that it was prepared to remove the old bugaboo that aboriginal rights had to be extinguished before they could be negotiated, our Party agreed with it and we commended the Government at that time.

We do not want to see the Government rest on some achievement of two months or three months ago or on the commitment which the Prime Minister gave two years ago. We want to see the Government move ahead and deal with the agenda which aboriginal people are placing before it now. It has not done that.

Mr. Redway: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Hon. Member. As I indicated in my comments, the whole question of self-government and the recognition of the negotiating process for self-government are parts of the policy adopted by the Government under the Coolican report and the comprehensive land claims settlement policy. The Government has made that recognition and is moving forward with the procedure.

However, it is interesting to note that in the resolution on aboriginal rights put forward and adopted at the last convention of the New Democratic Party nothing was said about the question of entrenchment of those rights in the Constitution.

In that case, would the Hon. Member now be prepared to reconsider and move a motion of congratulations, since the Government has moved with a policy which recognizes that aboriginal rights should not be extinguished and the policy also includes negotiations for self-government, something which the NDP in its resolutions completely ignored when it last dealt with the issue?

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, the entrenchment of the right to self-government is part of New Democratic Party policy. I will show it to the Hon. Member afterwards. He should read the whole book. We do not deal with everything in every resolution.

Mr. Redway: Table it.

Mr. Manly: The Hon. Member asks me to table it. If I could have the permission of the House to table it, I would do so.