

*Motions for Papers*

this House by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The hon. member took some time in making the point that the Indians were not a party to these conversations or negotiations. Of course, that is not the case, and my hon. friend knows it. After all, he should know it best because of the experience of the Indian band in his own riding. He knows well that the Nishga tribal council stated publicly that they accepted the general principle of the new Indian policy. That happened after negotiation and after consultation, and I think my hon. friend knows it.

I think my hon. friend also knows that part of the white paper on Indian policy suggested that it would be desirable for us not to have separate sorts of services for Canadians, that we should consider all Canadians equal, that they are in fact equal, and that they should all have the same sorts of services. For reasons set out in the white paper and enunciated by the minister in subsequent speeches, we were told that those services could best be provided by the respective provincial governments and that if the Indian people agree, in consultation with the provincial and federal governments, there must be a three part agreement with respect to these services, so that over a period of time there may be an orderly transfer.

There has never been any suggestion that there would not be a three party negotiation. In fact, it involved three parties. In his motion, my friend asks for all notes made at meetings between officials of the federal and respective provincial governments.

There is no inconsistency in this matter because the white paper and the minister's subsequent statements have made it very clear that the negotiations would be on a three party basis and that any transfer or change of any kind would only take place with the express consent of the Indian peoples. As a matter of interest, I think the first Indian nation to say publicly that there have been consultations with respect to the new policy was the Nishga nation. The tribal council made that announcement, and that nation is located in my hon. friend's riding.

May I now deal with the other aspect of my hon. friend's argument? There have been, of course, conversations and discussions between the two levels of government and the Indian people. He raised the matter of notes and conversations and also, I believe, the question of memoranda and working papers resulting from the discussions. I suppose the hon.

member is asking for conversations and memos made during conversations.

● (5:20 p.m.)

The second matter I now want to argue is whether these should be produced. Possibly I should preface my remarks by reading two paragraphs from the white paper presented by the minister. These come under the general heading of "Foreword". I will read these two paragraphs into the record:

The government does not wish to perpetuate policies which carry with them the seeds of disharmony and disunity, policies which prevent Canadians from fulfilling themselves and contributing to their society. It seeks a partnership to achieve a better goal. The partners in this search are the Indian people, the government of the provinces, the Canadian community as a whole and the government of Canada. As all partnerships do, this will require consultation, negotiation, give and take, and co-operation if it is to succeed.

That is the end of the first paragraph I wish to read. I halt for a moment in order to underline the fact that the whole matter of negotiations is predicated on a partnership. It is referred to as a partnership between the two levels of government, federal and provincial, and the Indian people. The white paper sets out in the first page that this partnership must be achieved by consultation between those three groups. I now quote the second paragraph:

Many years will be needed. Some efforts may fail, but learning comes from failure and from what is learned success may follow. All the partners have to learn; all will have to change many attitudes.

The white paper points out it will take some time for this process of negotiation. We all know it will take some time. We cannot change overnight attitudes of 100 years, policies, and conditions which have unfortunately lasted far too long. The white paper sets out, and the minister has said repeatedly, that this is a matter of negotiation between the three partners. During the negotiations there will probably be memoranda. When I speak about negotiations between the three parties, I include the ten provincial governments. Negotiations will be carried on with innumerable Indian bands. Therefore the memoranda, working papers, telephone conversations and all the paraphernalia that accompanies modern day negotiations will pile up. The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the federal government is one of the parties to these negotiations. If we are going to enter into these negotiations with the hope there will be agreement and unity between these three parties at the conclusion of the negotia-