

*Adjournment Debate*

senior officials and apparently approved by him. The Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Danson) signed the original of this cabinet document and forwarded it to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Buchanan) with a covering letter dated April 3. In this letter he indicates that both ministers had discussed the document the previous week, presumably an earlier draft, that some revisions had been made as a result, and suggests that both ministers should meet again to review the manner in which the presentation to cabinet should be made.

In the case of the Metis housing draft policy, it had not been reviewed with the minister or signed by him, although he had a copy at the time of the consultation meeting on October 5, 1973.

On May 6, 1975, a consultation meeting was held including representatives of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the National Indian Brotherhood. The representatives from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development were Arthur Kroeger, the deputy minister, Peter Leseaux, the assistant deputy minister, and Bob Connelly.

The Central Mortgage and Housing representatives were Alain Nantel, vice-president, and Sam Cormier. There were 11 representatives from the National Indian Brotherhood, including George Manual, the president. At this meeting the provisions of the draft cabinet document were reviewed in detail and copies were distributed to the representatives of the National Indian Brotherhood to take away for study. The deputy minister of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development chaired the meeting.

The draft proposals on Metis housing were similarly distributed to the Metis consulting group on October 5, 1973, by a junior member of CMHC who presumably thought he was acting with the sanction of the president of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the minister. In this case, however, the papers did not leave the room.

The situation currently is that the National Indian Brotherhood have rejected many of the proposals in the joint Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development policy draft. The National Indian Brotherhood object to placing their housing needs at the tender mercies of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation priorities which, in the past year, have done little or nothing for Metis housing. The National Indian Brotherhood suspect that the proposals are simply a device for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to dilute responsibility for future failures throughout the public service so that they, themselves, will not be such a large target.

Indian housing policy is still under development. The question which is relevant now is whether this will continue to be done in consultation with the National Indian Brotherhood or whether the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development will try to force an unacceptable housing policy down the throats of the Indians. He should at least be prepared to present the Indian point of view to cabinet.

[Mr. Oberle.]

In terms of the parallels in the Indian and Metis consultation process, there are a number of interesting questions that remain unanswered. First, can the incident involving the joint review by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the National Indian Brotherhood of a draft cabinet document on Indian housing on May 6 be viewed as a new departure by the government from its former excessive preoccupation with the confidentiality of such documents?

Secondly, if the government has not introduced a new policy with respect to the preparation of cabinet submissions, is it contemplating disciplinary action against officials of the Indian affairs department and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation?

If such action is not being contemplated, could the government explain the difference in the consultation process that has just taken place on Indian housing and the consultation process on Metis housing that was authorized by the previous minister and the president of the Central Mortgage and Housing in September, 1973? The issue here is both consultation and justice.

The late Lester B. Pearson, on October 25, 1963, stated the policy that that government and subsequent Liberal governments would follow in the area of cabinet secrecy. He laid out two points that would have to be followed, both of which were ignored in the first and second instances that I have outlined here tonight. As reported at page 4044 of *Hansard* for October 25, 1963, the right hon. gentleman said:

The first of the new requirements is to inform the person involved when his security or reliability is in doubt and may have to involve his dismissal.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. gentleman but the time allotted to him has expired.

**Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Madam Speaker, in replying to this question I should perhaps point out at the outset that a document does not become a cabinet document until it has been approved by the responsible minister, signed by him or her, and forwarded to the Privy Council office. The document being distributed at the meeting with the National Indian Brotherhood is not of this character. Each copy was clearly marked "Draft—for discussion purposes only".

The action taken by departmental officials in distributing the draft document had been explicitly authorized in advance by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Buchanan). It was the objective of the minister and departmental officials to make the meeting as productive as possible, and for this purpose they thought they should take Indian representatives fully into their confidence. It was also anticipated that, after examining the draft document, the National Indian Brotherhood would wish to suggest changes and improvements in it.

Discussions with the National Indian Brotherhood have not yet been concluded. The nature of any proposals that the Minister of Indian Affairs may decide to submit to cabinet therefore remain undetermined. In view of the