

*Suggested National Indian Day*

government bureaucracy to stand in the way of progress so much needed by our native people.

We can develop recognition of their outstanding contributions as individuals by reading a little of the history of our native people. If we read that history we will understand and admire their culture, their philosophy and their way of life. Believe me, if the members of this House of Commons had even half of the philosophic concept of life that our native people had years ago, we would not have nearly the trouble we have within this nation. They had a philosophy, an understanding and a concept of life that far surpasses anything we have been able to develop. We need not be patronizing or paternal in our attitude any longer. Rather we should accept this group of people because they are human beings and a part of life on this planet. They are not just a particular group of people with a particular ethnic background.

It has become commonplace, Mr. Speaker, in this parliament and in others which preceded it for motions in the names of private members to be talked out, in other words, not allowed to come to a vote. So far as the New Democratic party is concerned, and I have consulted with our members who are here, we are desirous of having this motion come to a vote. We have only one person to make a few comments, namely, myself, and we hope other members will be equally brief in their remarks. This is not the time for parliament to be speaking with a forked tongue, as the saying goes amongst some native tribes; this is the time for parliament to show by action that we do not only talk in favour of the recognition of the cultural development of the native people but we act as well.

I sincerely urge that even if parliament votes upon no other motion in the name of a private member, no other private member's public bill, no other business of a private member, we would be well advised to vote on the motion before us now. Then the native people would know we have respect for their contribution and that we recognize fully their historical development and cultural contribution to Canadian society.

**Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to rise at this time and speak in support of the motion introduced by the hon. member for Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. Muir). I note that the objective hoped to be achieved by the motion is the marking of the presence among us of

our first citizens and the recognition of their outstanding contribution to our national life. I believe there is an increasing awareness amongst the general population of Canada of the existence of the native people and a corresponding desire to atone in some measure for the attitude which we in general have taken toward them, either consciously or unconsciously, in the past.

The motion before us has to do not with our responsibilities to the native people from an economic point of view but with a recognition of their cultural contribution and the importance of this human resource in our midst. As we think of the motion before us I believe we must recognize the very important contribution that has been made to Canadian life by the native people. We must recognize also the fact that the native people are able to make an invaluable contribution to the various segments of our economy in which they move. This has been pointed out by the mover of the motion in referring to the number of native people who have made an outstanding success in their chosen vocation, profession or trade.

I believe that the adoption of this motion and the proclaiming of a national Indian day will not only bring to these people a sense of satisfaction through knowing that we do appreciate their contribution and recognize their abilities but it will assist the non-Indian population of Canada to have a greater appreciation for and a greater knowledge of the contribution the Indian people are making. I am therefore not going to take further time and thereby contribute to talking out this measure. I simply want to indicate clearly that we are in full support of this motion and we hope we will have an opportunity of so indicating by voting on it before six o'clock.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Albert Béchard (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to congratulate the mover of this notice of motion stressing the importance of the contribution of the Indians to the building of our country, since they were its first inhabitants.

We will celebrate next year the centennial of our country's confederation and the Centennial Commission, which is responsible for the preparation of the various programs and celebrations which will mark in 1967 the various events of that period of our history, wants to stress the importance of each of the