again express my objections to the strategy the government chose in introducing this bill into the parliamentary process.

I use the precise words of the minister of Indian affairs: "The scope and complexity of these agreements is unprecedented. This government has used all means at its disposal to stifle public exposure of this legislation". That begs the question: Why?

This party had no desire to block this legislation and could not even if we chose to. We simply wanted time for adequate public scrutiny, examination and meaningful debate. Was this unrelenting bullying simply to satisfy someone's ego or is it, as some aboriginal people suggested to me, to prevent proper examination and exposure of the fact that this is a move to exploit the desire for dollars of current band leadership to extinguish aboriginal rights now provided through the treaties and the Indian Act? Time will tell.

While this was procedurally allowable, I would remind those members who were in opposition in the last Parliament to remember their own cries of objection when the Conservative government imposed those conditions on themselves and the Liberals' promise in the red book to do things differently.

To those who would dismiss our demands for fairness I would like to quote from this very self–government agreement in the preamble where there is a definition of consultation, which I presume was what was supposed to be taking place here. That definition says:

> Consultation means to provide to the party to be consulted notice of a manner to be decided in sufficient form and detail as to allow that party to prepare its views on the matter, and a reasonable period of time in which the party to be consulted may prepare its views on the matter and an opportunity to present such views to the party obliged to consult.

Surely this House deserves at least the same consideration as that provided in the agreement.

• (1855)

Since these bills cannot come into force until pending surface and subsurface legislation is introduced in the fall, it seems reasonable that these bills could have stayed in committee for the summer and had proper analysis without in any way delaying their implementation.

However having gained some time, I am more and more coming to the realization of my question of the minister in committee before his unprovoked attack upon me. My question was of his vision of self–government. We are now beginning to see his vision. It seems to be that of sovereign nation states within Canada with powers in some cases parallel to the federal government fully funded by the Canadian taxpayer.

The member from Churchill during the committee process continually demanded an answer as to who in fact holds title to the lands in Canada. It is becoming clearer and clearer that this government's idea is that the aboriginal peoples of Canada still retain title to the lands in Canada and we as non–aboriginal people are simply leasing or renting the land that we are using and occupying. I might notify all Canadians that as of today the rent is going up on the land that we occupy.

I must now voice our concerns on behalf of all Canadians with this legislation. First, I must question why we are now being asked to pass this self–government legislation when only four out of 14 bands being given self–government have agreed to sign this agreement.

I am aware that all 14 bands have agreed to the umbrella agreement but the 10 non–signatories must be trying to negotiate substantially different agreements or there would have been 14 agreements before us today instead of 10. I suspect very much that the hesitation of the other 10 has much to do with the extinguishment of some very fundamental aboriginal rights.

Should the governor in council have the authority to approve the remaining 10 agreements without the examination of Parliament? I question this. It goes right to the question of what in fact are we here for? In addition to the aforementioned concerns, I have concerns about the minister's remarks when leading off the discussion when he said that these self–government agreements do not have constitutional protection. They may, however, be revisited to apply this protection when his government is able to define the inherent right to self–government. I submit this statement has a serious impact on the goals of clarity and certainty which were to be achieved.

There are a number of very subtle references in this agreement that I believe and our legal counsel agrees have very important implications for this country. These references will no doubt be discounted by others as simply wording but I am sure most people here know full well the difference wording can make in the interpretation of legal documents.

This is the first time I am aware of any piece of legislation dealing with Canada's aboriginal people referring to these people as First Nations and to the people involved as citizens instead of participants. This subtle wording could have implications not only in the international community but also in the self–determination of other cultural groups likely to be dealt with in this country soon.

We are giving legitimacy to nations within nations and beginning the dismantling of Canadian confederation. I question if we as Canadians should be setting up ethnically or racially based homelands when South Africa is just celebrating an end to the same system because it found it to be discriminatory, divisive and most undesirable. It might even be open to challenge under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on the ground that it discriminates on the basis of race.

I find it surprising that the Liberals and NDP so quickly support this concept. In a biography of T.C. Douglas, the much respected first leader of the NDP by Doris F. Shackleton, she states: "The practical obvious solution is to do away with the