

misunderstandings, misinterpretation, and a lack of knowledge on the part of the Canadian public of the Indian situation.

Today I would like to try to penetrate this cloud and explain to you what was proposed by the government.

This is a speech to clarify the policy statement made on 25 June. The minister then said, "Let me explain", and in a number of short, terse statements tells what is not in the policy. Then, on page 2, there is another series of short, terse and succinct statements, mostly clichés but not beclouded by details, after which the minister asks, "What did the policy say?"

It says that the proposals contained in the policy statement are to be discussed with Indian people, provincial governments and the Canadian public before any of them are implemented.

That is the important part, Mr. Speaker. Then he goes on:

It says that representatives of the Indian people should be involved in discussions with the provinces.

But yesterday the Parliamentary Secretary told the Indian people that it was none of their business what took place during discussions with the provinces, that it was privileged information which it would not be in their interest to disclose. Here are two statements in conflict with each other which reflect on the part of the government, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien)—I regret he is not here to listen to my remarks but I would be prepared to say the same thing if he were here—and on the part of the Parliamentary Secretary, a deliberate, conscious and overt effort to mislead the Indian people and a deliberate, conscious attempt to mislead Parliament. I would not go so far as to say that the government or the minister are not telling the truth but the minister either must be very dumb or be deliberately trying to establish a course to mislead us.

At page 4 of this clarifying statement of October 2 to that great group in Regina called the Liberal Women's Federation we find this:

Indian people, because of past experiences, have a deep distrust of governments, both federal and provincial, and tend to regard the proposals with suspicion.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in contrast with the minister's statement, the statement issued yesterday is certainly not doing anything to move the native Indian people away from their suspicion and distrust.

*Motions for Papers*

**Mr. Gibson:** Why don't you read the rest of it?

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** My friend asks why I don't read the rest of it—

**Mr. Gibson:** The next sentence.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** If my friend would not mind containing his enthusiasm I will get to the next sentence, and a few others too. I know my hon. friend is champing at the bit. He wishes to comment about this notice of motion. He can read what he wants from the statement. I say again that the statements emanating from the government are contradictory. We had one from the government to the effect that the native Indian people should be involved in the discussions with the provinces; yet nothing has been done about getting them there. The minister refused to let them come. Then, we had a statement yesterday from the Parliamentary Secretary to the effect that these negotiations are not the business of the Indian people, and that the government will not disclose what happened. I simply say that this manner of acting contributes to the deep distrust our native Indian people feel for governments, federal and provincial. In case my hon. friend cannot read for himself, the next sentence reads as follows:

• (5:10 p.m.)

In private meetings with representatives of the Indian people I have explained the policy proposals, and I have listened to their comments and criticisms.

Does the hon. member want me to read the next sentence too? It reads:

These meetings have been helpful and many more will be held.

Those statements do not detract one bit from the minister's twin suggestions. He suggested that the native Indian people should be involved in the discussions with the provinces. Neither can one deny that these negotiations touch on the rights of the Indian people and that the Prime Minister, the minister, the Parliamentary Secretary and the whole kit and caboodle of the government and Liberal party have not lifted a single, solitary finger in order to bring one native Indian person into these discussions. Our Indians have been denied that opportunity.