

October 30, the Liberal party moved from a position of absolute rejection to one of qualified consideration. That is not moving very far. None the less, it moved them from the position of objecting to the recognition of aboriginal rights.

I shall read into the record a statement issued on June 12, 1969, about two weeks before the government white paper on Indian affairs came down. It was introduced and made public in an attempt to influence the government and the minister in the development of that so-called white paper. I will read a few extracts from this policy statement issued by the New Democratic Party. I will not read it all, but it is all available. The words I intend to quote have significance today because they have an even stronger ring of truth today than they had in 1969. The statement commences as follows:

In dealing with Indian affairs today we must do so with a more intense look at history than has been the case in the past . . . in looking forward and providing redress for the multitude of grievances which our native Indian people have, we must always remember the starting point of those grievances—

The one basic area in which conflict arose was that which related in a general sense to the culture of the native Indian and how that culture was defeated by the European. Between the two groups there was a very fundamental difference in the concept of nature, of land, of the resources. The native Indian had a spiritual and communal concept of life which the invaders could not have, for their quest was to conquer and to claim and to own all that they came across in the name of their mother country and/or their religion.

It continues:

The treaties imposed one culture and concept of land on top of another and replaced it.

The treaties were never drafted, prepared or interpreted from the point of view of the native Indian. In fact, his point of view was never really considered—

It continues, but that is the basis of the declaration we made at that time about the need to recognize aboriginal title or rights. I do not want again to go into the statement of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in the fall of that year, in which he said absolutely no. It has been quoted by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss Macdonald) and the minister and the government know of it. I think it is worthwhile to put on the record a statement which the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) made in June of last year after he had an opportunity to reflect upon the 1969 white paper position. When speaking of the rejection by the Indian people of the white paper he had introduced on June 26, he said:

They rejected them on the grounds that they gave no recognition to special rights and status for Indians.

He then made statements as to reasons for the rejection of the white paper and wound up with this very significant declaration:

If the government had shown willingness to entertain Indian concepts of aboriginal rights and had in place a cultural program to strengthen and reinforce Indian pride in self, their attitude to the proposals might have been different and probably much more favourable.

That was a recognition, in June of last year, by the minister that he and his government had been wrong in 1969 in rejecting the idea of aboriginal rights. On this very day the alternatives or choices available to us are these:

### *Indian Affairs*

First, we can stand and be counted in a vote on this particular motion, declaring ourselves in favour of aboriginal rights. We can recognize aboriginal title. Second, we can continue to debate the motion till the hour of six o'clock, at which time it will slip from its position on the order paper and come under the authority of government orders. Then at the initiative of the government it will be brought forward again or buried forever. Taking into account what happened in the committee on the night this motion was passed there, I accept the prospect that it will be talked out. This will be an indication that the government and the whole of the Liberal party do not want to stand and be counted on the question of aboriginal rights.

I make that assumption on the fact that the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson), on the day this motion was before the committee, put his hand on the paper presented by the National Indian Brotherhood and said, "I can accept this. There's nothing wrong with this, and I agree with it". The hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo (Mr. Marchand) did the same thing; he said, "Certainly we can all agree with this". Then when the vote came in the evening, the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo denied his own inheritance by abstaining from the vote on a so-called, but spurious, procedural ground. I suggest the action taken then by Liberal members of the committee will show itself again today in the fact that those hon. members will talk out this motion. We are prepared to accept that that might happen.

• (1600)

I am prepared right now, if the House would agree, to sit down and we could vote. I will gladly do that. Someone suggested that from the other side. If I could obtain a commitment now from hon. gentlemen on the Liberal benches who were silent on that proposition, could we put the question now, Mr. Speaker, with unanimous consent? The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development says no. I will gladly relinquish my time to the minister so that he may speak for the whole 40 minutes. We could vote after he had spoken. Is there agreement to that?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Howard:** The minister again says no. An hon. gentleman over here says no, too. He said no in the committee, but never mind that. They say no. It is on the record that the Liberal party does not want to vote on this. They are afraid of it and want to continue to talk out of both sides of their mouths about aboriginal rights.

**An hon. Member:** Another 100 years.

**Mr. Howard:** I hope they do not last that long. If we look back, history will show some fundamental things that have happened in respect of aboriginal title. When the explorers from Europe came to this land, they brought with them a different concept of land title than that which existed and which was in the minds and understanding of the native Indian people who lived in this land. The European brought with him the concept of land ownership that