

*Motions for Papers*

or any agency or department thereof and any provincial government or agency or department thereof since June 25, 1969 relating to the policy statement on Indian Affairs made in the House of Commons by the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on June 25, 1969.

He said: Mr. Speaker, as the motion indicates it has its origin in the policy statement on Indian affairs presented to parliament by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) on June 25. I am sure that a number of government members, in anticipation of this motion being called, have on their desks copies of that policy statement since it now appears to me, in Indian Affairs activities, the gospel according to St. Jean.

In order that there appear some continuity in the context of my remarks, may I be permitted to read the motion again so that it will appear at this particular place? Disregarding the "humble Address" part, what I want laid before the House is:

—a copy of all notes made all meetings or conversations between the government or any agency or department thereof and any provincial government or agency or department thereof since June 25, 1969 relating to the policy statement on Indian Affairs made in the House of Commons by the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on June 25, 1969.

● (5:00 p.m.)

Yesterday the Parliamentary Secretary, in replying to that motion, said, and I think I should insert his exact words here:

The hon. member is requesting copies of notes or conversations between the federal government and the provincial government. Conversations which have taken place up to now, other than that correspondence which will be tabled in the motion for the production of papers No. 63, are considered privileged information and it would not be in the interest of the governments or indeed the Indian people to table this information at this stage of negotiations. Under the circumstances, I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the motion.

Might I comment in passing that, as indicated in the remarks of the Parliamentary Secretary, there had been conversations with provincial governments and presumably there are notes as a result of those conversations.

May I reiterate what I said yesterday, and underline the proposition that the government has no right whatsoever, no moral right and no ethical right, to arrogate unto itself the authority to enter into negotiations with provincial governments regarding the affairs of at least a quarter of a million Indian people, plus another quarter million who do not have Indian status as defined in the Indian Act. It

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

is typical of the technocratic and arrogant attitude of the government that it wants to conduct negotiations with the provincial government in secret. That is the sense of the answer given yesterday, that they are not going to disclose to the Indian people any conversations the minister or any member of the government has had with the provincial governments. This information is too good, too cherished, to publish but it is something that deals with the fundamental rights of the Indian people, and is information developed as a result of the policy statement made in this House by the minister.

It is the same old story so far as this bunch of Liberals is concerned. As an example, let us look at 1943 when the federal government, a Liberal government at that time, entered into secret negotiations with the provincial government in British Columbia which was a Liberal dominated coalition in those days. These negotiations resulted in the native Indian peoples in British Columbia losing their rights over mineral resources and reserves. Today, we have the same story, another set of closed door discussions and a contradiction between what the Parliamentary Secretary said yesterday and what the minister has said on this matter. I have here a press release from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development entitled "The Government Policy on Indians—What is the Debate About? A Speech by the Honourable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the Saskatchewan Women's Liberal Federation, Regina, Saskatchewan, October 2, 1969."

Now, if the minister was really going to tell the truth about his feelings why tell the Liberal women in Regina—why not tell his own party? I might add, Mr. Speaker, that this speech was so precious that a David A. Munro, who is presumably Dr. Munro, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Indian Consultation and Negotiations Group in the department—there is that word "negotiations" again—saw fit to send the same speech out again under a covering letter of October 30, stating that it was an extremely valuable and important speech which had not been widely reported. I should like to quote from this important speech. Right at the start the minister says:

In June I announced the government's proposals for an Indian policy. I had hoped that a vigorous debate might start over the policy proposals put forward. The debate has appeared, but much of it is not over the proposals advanced by the government. The debate has become clouded because of